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The Indiana Jewish

# Post & Opinion

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Summer Camps

## Israeli doves propose unilateral withdrawal

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israel's peace movement has put a new twist to its campaign, calling for unilateral withdrawal from some or most of the lands claimed by the Palestinians.

Labor Party leaders and other doves gathered at a busy Tel Aviv intersection to persuade rush-hour drivers Israel should quit the West Bank and Gaza areas occupied in the 1967 Mideast war.

Activists hope to take the campaign to intersections across the country and plan a large rally in Tel Aviv next week — their most ambitious effort since Israeli-Palestinian fighting erupted in September 2000.

The unilateral pullout idea, which has been adopted by iconic figures in the peace camp such as renowned authors Amos Oz and A.B. Yehoshua.

Previously, the peace camp pressed mainly for negotiations toward peace.

"There is no hope for an agreement soon with the Palestinians," wrote Yehoshua in the daily *Ha'aretz*. "The only way to somewhat calm the situation and create the foundation for a future agreement is a unilateral separation carried out by Israel, with the tacit agreement of the Palestinians."

Prime Minister Sharon and many other Israelis disagree — even some key members of the Labor Party.

Labor's Ephraim Sneh, Israel's transport minister, said, "whoever runs away will continue to be pursued ... If you leave difficult places, they will also want Tel Aviv."

Recently, though, scores of reserve soldiers sparked heated debate by signing a letter in which they said they would refuse to serve in the West Bank and Gaza where, they said, they were being asked to "dominate, expel, starve and humiliate" Palestinians.

Palestinians worry about anything less than a total pullout. Some of their leaders have expressed fear that the land they seek would be divided into sectors surrounded by Israel and give Israelis the illusion that the problem has been solved.



**SUCCESS** — One of the most successful efforts of the American Jewish community is Birthright Israel and as proof will be the American Jewish community of the next several generations as these young people grow up and take leadership roles. The Post and Opinion will give a lifetime subscription to anyone who can name all these potential future Jewish leaders.



# Rona's Roving Reports

## Super Sunday phone-a-thon needs you!

By RONA TRACHTENBERG

Register for synagogue celebration

Friday, Feb. 15, is the deadline to RSVP for Congregation Shaarey Tefilla's Second Decade Celebration Day/Luncheon on Saturday, March 9.

Shabbat services will begin at 9 a.m. followed by a special luncheon organized by event chairpeople Michelle and Ofer Korin.

Synagogue President Richard M. Markoff said, "We will be honoring those families who came together in the early 1990s with the concept of a new type of synagogue for Indianapolis. It will also be a time to re-enforce the bonds of friendship, fellowship and Conservative Judaism that have made the first 10 years possible and will lay the foundation for an even brighter future. We will be recognizing families in our community, who have contributed to our success."

Richard Lederman of Cleveland, executive director of the Great Lakes and Rivers Re-

gion of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, will be a guest speaker.

Please call the synagogue office 253-4591 to be a part of this milestone event.

### Super Sunday phone-a-thon volunteers needed

On Sunday, Feb. 17, the Federation will be holding its annual Super Sunday Phone-a-thon, in which you are invited to help raise necessary funds to keep the Indiana Jewish community functioning.

No experience is necessary. You just have to like talking on the telephone. There will be a brief training session before each shift. In addition to that wonderful warm feeling you'll get on a cold February day knowing you are helping to make a difference in your community, each Super Sunday volunteer will be treated to some exciting extras.

This year, each work session centers around a special "swinging" theme creatively arranged by event co-chairs

Gary Perel, Lee Rouda and Gary Stark.

Volunteers who work the 9 a.m. until noon session will be treated to a light breakfast and gourmet coffees at the Super Sunday Jumpin' Jivin' Java session.

Volunteers who like to sleep a little later can work from 11:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Cookin' With Coltrane work session. In addition to making calls to their friends, volunteers can participate in cooking demonstrations with Nancy Landman of Great Cooks & Company. The featured menu item is "make-your-own gourmet pizza."

Finally, Swingin' Super Sunday will wind down with the final session of the day, Sippin' with Soul from 4:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. Volunteers will finish off the day with a light buffet supper and kosher wine tasting.

If you would like to help at any of the Swingin' Super Sunday sessions, please send an e-mail to info@jfgi.org with

your name, daytime phone number and preferred work session. You will be contacted to confirm your time.

If you have any questions, please e-mail campaign@jfgi.org or call Ruthie at 726-5450 Ext. 537.

### Annual IFY/JiFFTY ski trip

On Sunday and Monday, Feb. 17 and 18, Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation will host the IFY/JiFFTY overnight ski trip to Perfect North Ski Slopes. This trip is first come, first serve, so sign up early by calling the temple office (255-6647) to register.

### Judaica shop training program

On Sunday, Feb. 17, 3 p.m., Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation is sponsoring a training program to teach would-be volunteers how to run the on-premises Sisterhood Judaica shop.

The requirements are a willingness to learn and being punctual and friendly.

If you are interested in taking the program, please call Betty Cahall at 844-1070.

### Hamantashen are ready!

From Feb. 18 to 25 (10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.) hungry Purim celebrators can pick up their orders of poppy, prune, apricot, raspberry, strawberry filled hamantashen made especially by the Sisterhood of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla. The hamantashen maven, Julie Mervis (255-6193) will

answer questions.

### Tuesday Golden Age Club at JCC

On Tuesday, Feb. 19, the JCC's Golden Age Club will be hosting its on-going Tuesday program featuring an exercise class from 11:30 to 12 noon, followed by a sumptuous kosher lunch of chicken stir fry, egg rolls, fried rice, fruit, coffee, Coffee Rich and tea. The fee for the exercise class is 75 cents and \$1.50 for the lunch. For more information, please contact Lori Moss, adult services director, at the JCC (251-9467).

### Singles event

On Tuesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., the Indy Jewish Singles Discussion Group will have a program on "My People's Prayerbook; The Sh'ma and its Blessings." For details and location, please call Ed at 876-1201.

### Sisterhood breakfast

On Wednesday, Feb. 20, 9:30 a.m., the Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation is hosting a breakfast at Le Peep Restaurant, 86th and Township Line Road.

This is a chance to meet other women from IHC in an informal setting. Order off the menu and pay your own way. Eat a little or a lot. A private room in the back has been reserved as a babysitting area.

Please RSVP to Joanne Lenke 571-1093.

Continued on page 4

## HANOVER COLLEGE

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## Claims deadline is extended

By ED STATTMANN

An international commission administering insurance claims of Holocaust survivors and their heirs recently extended its deadline for applicants from Feb. 15 to Sept. 30, but even so, few of the claimants are expected to receive anything.

National media report that fewer than 1 percent of the more than 77,000 claims submitted to the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims have led to settlements.

The panel has spent some \$40 million on administrative expenses, but has achieved fewer than 800 settlement offers totaling around \$12 million in claims payments, according to its records.

Survivors and their heirs say the major insurance companies involved know that if they delay long enough, the claimants will die off before receiving any of the benefits they were meant to get.

"We had opposed the development of the international commission. It was set up as an alternative to the litigation," says Richard Shevitz of the Cohen and Malad law firm. He and Irwin Levin had pursued settlements of those claims as well as settlements of lawsuits to obtain money deposited by Holocaust victims in Swiss banks and funds to be repaid by German companies who employed slave labor under the Nazis. The Swiss banks settlement and the slave labor compensation are being paid to beneficiaries,

but the insurance money is a different story.

"The insurance companies were under pressure from insurance commissioners to participate in this commission and eventually chose that route, which was supposed to serve as an alternative forum to litigation for the payment of these claims," Shevitz said. "I always believed that the absence of judicial intervention would take the teeth out of the process. And that's what's happening."

"The Swiss bank settlement was pursuant to a court settlement. The

German slave enforced labor payments are outside of the court process but they are subject to a much more sophisticated process involving the United States government, the German government and the ongoing participation of some of the victim representatives including some of the lawyers," he said.

Critics of the commission on insurance claims say much of the problem is stonewalling by European insurance companies. The companies agreed to participate in the process, but have withheld the

files with lists of people who held policies from 1930 to 1945.

Without those lists of names, heirs who were children during the Holocaust don't know whether their parents had insurance.

The European insurance companies have fought the release of names citing privacy laws, research and administrative costs and other concerns.

The impasse drew a rebuke from a congressional committee last year and has so embarrassed the commission's chairman, former U.S. secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger that he resigned at a recent commission meeting. He was persuaded the following day to resume his chairmanship on the promise of broader authority.

Shevitz doesn't express have high hopes for the commission's success, but it's the only recourse right now for heirs.

I would encourage anyone who has a claim to participate in the process. This provides the only real vehicle to receive any payment at this point in time."

## Keeping up with legislature

Here are a few highlights from the Indiana Legislature that the P-O has been following:

The Senate approved a bill that would require public schools to post the motto "In God We Trust" in every classroom. It requires the motto be at least 11 inches by 14 inches and framed, and requires that they not be paid for with taxpayer money. The bill now is before the House.

The Senate passed a bill that would require doctors to offer women considering abortion ultrasounds and a chance to listen to the heartbeats of the developing fetus.

Its chances of passing the House are uncertain. Opponents see it as one more attempt to interfere with or sway a woman's choice about whether to have an abortion.

The Senate narrowly defeated a bill that would have evicted news media from their Statehouse offices. The bill was seen as retribution for The Indianapolis Star's exposure of questionable spending by legislators from the Build Indiana Fund they control. It would have hampered coverage of the legislature and state government by Indiana news media.



### Candlelighting FEBRUARY/MARCH INDIANAPOLIS

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February 22nd • 6:11 p.m.

March 1st • 6:19 p.m.

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## Rona

Continued from page 2  
Register for Yiddish Club Purim party

Wednesday, Feb. 20 is the deadline to RSVP for the Jules Dorfman Yiddish Club Purim Party featuring the talented, young singer Hannah Farahan, who will give a solo concert on Sunday, Feb. 24, at 1 p.m., at the JCC.

The kosher lunch menu will be roast chicken breast, green beans, sweet potatoes, cake, coffee, Coffee Rich, and tea.

Mike Blain and Fay Dorfman run this event.

The cost is \$5. Space is limited, so please RSVP by calling Naomi at the JCC 251-9467, ext. 226.

### Register for TGIS Shabbat dinner

Wednesday, Feb. 20, noon, is the deadline to register for the Friday, Feb. 22 IHC Traditional TGIS Shabbat dinner at 7 p.m. — following the 6 p.m. Shabbat services.

TGIS is an acronym for Thank God It's Shabbat.

This meal consists of matzo ball soup, oven roasted

chicken, kugel, green beans, salad and cake.

The cost is \$5 for children under 10 years of age and \$10 for children over 10 and adults. This dinner is rated BF for "bring a friend."

Pre-payment (by cash, credit card, or check) is required. Please RSVP to Barbara, in the education office, 255-6647.

### Thursday Golden Age Club at JCC

On Thursday, Feb. 21, 11 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., the JCC's Golden Age Club will be hosting its on-going Thursday contemporary issues discussion, exercise class and lunch. The kosher lunch menu consists of chili with crackers, salad, corn, fruit, coffee, Coffee Rich and tea. The fee for the exercise class is 75 cents and \$1.50 for the lunch. For more information, please contact Lori Moss, adult services director, at the JCC (251-9467).

### Order USY hamantashen

Friday, Feb. 22 is the deadline to order hand-baked hamantashen by United Synagogue Youth (USY) of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck. They are offering poppy seed, apricot, prune and cherry for only \$6 a dozen. Order forms are available at the Religious School. Please pre-pay by check when you make your order. The hamantashen will be given out in the evening, during the Purim Carnival, Monday, Feb. 25.

### Mystery bus ride

On Saturday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m., Congregation B'nai Torah is sponsoring a mystery bus ride. The fee is \$10 and includes refreshments. Please RSVP by calling 253-5253.

### Correction

The January 26th bar mitzvah announcement for

## Rabbi Bram taking Ohio temple pulpit

Rabbi Eric J. Bram, 44, senior rabbi of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation since 1995, will be joining Suburban Temple-Kol Ami in Beachwood, Ohio, as its new senior rabbi in July 2002.

He'll succeed the temple's retiring senior rabbi, Michael Oppenheimer, who will become rabbi emeritus.

Bram was chosen after a yearlong search process.

Bram had told The Indianapolis Star recently he had to make the change because it was best for his family.

IHC's 3,500 member congregation has begun the process of searching for a replacement, which could take a year.

Bram succeeded Rabbi Jonathan Stein at IHC. Stein had served the congregation for 20 years before taking a post at a large San Diego congregation.

Bram was previously a pulpit rabbi for 10 years at Temple Israel in St. Louis. While there, he also served as



Rabbi Eric Bram

chaplain at the U.S. Penitentiary and was on the faculty of St. Louis University Medical School, the University of Missouri and the Reform movement's Goldman Union Camp.

He and his wife, Debbie, are Chicago natives. They have two children, Jessica, 14, and Daniel, 9.

Michael Landini should have read:

"In my Haftorah in the Book of Judges," explained Michael, "Judge Deborah of the Israelites and military leader Barak go into war

against Sisera, who loses and flees away to his so-called ally who then kills him."

Camp scholarships for cancer kids

Jewish children, ages 8-13, Continued on next page

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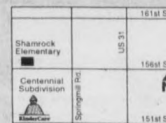
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## Critic's Corner

### Classic comedy keeps us laughing

By CHARLES EPSTEIN

"The Man Who Came To Dinner" opened at the Civic Theatre to a very enthusiastic audience that laughed heartily in all the right places.



It is no wonder that this hilarious comedy is a staple of American production. Written by the fabulous comedy duo of Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, this amazingly funny show has been playing in theatrical houses all through the nation since it opened on Broadway over 60 years ago.

Kaufman and Hart created numerous hysterical characters who entertain throughout the play. The story, that everyone should know by now, is that an acid-tongued radio show host, Sheridan Whiteside, comes to Ohio for a visit, breaks his leg and has to stay for some time with the Stanley household. This arrogant egomaniac takes over the household.

What makes this production at the Civic Theatre so delightful is the excellent work of the performers who do not have leads. The so-called "little people" lift the show to laughable heights.

On opening night the first performer to receive applause from the most appreciative audience was Vonda

Fuhrmann in the small but ditzy role of Harriet Stanley, a madcap woman to which Fuhrmann brought her own style of wackiness. The audience could not wait to witness more of her unusual and unrestrained physical charm. Bill Book was hilariously consistent in his role as head of the household, Mr. Stanley. Chris Goldfarb and Jen Harp ably played his children. The role of Dr. Bradley, an amateur would-be writer, was brilliantly portrayed by newcomer Steve Hermanson.

We had to wait until the third act for Seth Hale to exhibit his interpretation of Banjo based upon Harpo Marx. The wait was well worth it for this agile and humorous gentleman. Edwin Xavier impressed with his role of the eccentric Professor Metz. And who can forget Rod Isaac as the Expressman delivery person. These so-called eight "little people" were fantastic on stage with the huge leading performers.

The play pivots around the antics of Sheridan Whiteside, performed by Tom Beeler. This role is frightening in its enormity. Betty Landis got her share of laughs as Maggie Cutler, Whiteside's efficient secretary. And Sara Locker wowed us all with her exaggerated performance of the sophisticated actress Lorraine Sheldon. She emoted all over the stage, much to everyone's pleasure. Her energy and interpretation were greatly appreciated.

The rest of the cast and es-

pecially the crew, also deserve high praise for jobs well done.

Director Robert Sorbera can swell his chest with pride with this outstanding production. His direction was right on the money, squeezing for every laugh available.

The only flaw, and this is very petty, was the staircase up stage center rising to the second floor. It was so prominent it took away from some of the focus on the actors and was disturbing as well as distracting.

"The Man Who Came To Dinner" will last another weekend. Next on Civic's schedule is the fascinating shipboard spectacular musical "Anything Goes," which opens March 22 and runs through April 7.

## Rona

Continued from prev. page  
who are part of a family struggling with the cancer of a sibling or parent are eligible for full scholarships to Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake.

Camp Sprout Lake is located in Verbank, N.Y. - just two hours north of New York City. It combines the best in camping with a strong love for Israel and everything Jewish. The camp is Shabbat and kashrut observant, and accommodates a total of 200 boys and girls. Sprout Lake runs in two sessions: the first from June 24-July 17; the second from July 22-August 14. Scholarships are available for both sessions.

The scholarships are offered through the Jonathan Krakow Memorial Fund, established by Hadassah in 1996 to honor the memory of a young man who lost his struggle against brain cancer. Jonathan was a Young Judaea

Sprout Lake camper, and later a counselor. His days at Sprout Lake provided him with fun and friendships that comforted and encouraged him even in his darkest days.

For further information, contact Judy Shereck at (212) 303-4591, or jshereck@hadassah.org. Contributions to the fund can be made out to the Jonathan Krakow Memorial Fund, c/o Judy Shereck, Hadassah, 50 West 58th Street, New York, NY 10019.

### JWV to meet

On Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m., the Jewish War Veterans will have their monthly meeting at the JCC. A guest speaker, from the Air Force, will explain U.S. strategy in Afghanistan.

This event is free and open to all Jewish veterans. For more information, call Commander David Weintraub at 846-5268.

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# Obituaries

## Samuel Klezmer, 87, owned 2 businesses

Samuel Klezmer, 87, died Thursday, Feb. 7.

Mr. Klezmer, a 1937 Indiana University graduate with a B.S. in business, owned and operated United Home Furniture and United Home Supply Co. for 45 years.

He swam for three years on the IU swim team and for the Hoosier Athletic Club team. He also worked as a lifeguard at Garfield Park.

Mr. Klezmer was an Army veteran of World War II, where he served in the infantry and received the Purple Heart after being wounded in action.

He was a member of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, Phi Beta Delta Fraternity and a

former member for 30 years of Broadmoor Country Club. He was a member also of Jewish War Veterans, Hooverwood Guild, City of Hope and Skull and Crescent Fraternity.

Survivors include his wife, Faye Roberta Jones Klezmer; a son, Jack Klezmer; a daughter, Gayle Ann Caplin; a sister, Lillian DeLott, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Services were Monday, Feb. 11, at Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Meridian Hills Mortuary. Burial was in Beth-El Zedeck North Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the donor's favorite charity.

## Rosetta Siegel, 61, ran accounting firm

Rosetta "Rosie" Siegel, 61, of Carmel, died Monday, Feb. 4.

She had been a secretary and treasurer for 30 years at Carmel Book Keeping and Tax Services, a company owned by her husband, Donald Siegel, who survives her.

She was a member of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, B'nai B'rith and Hooverwood Guild and a life member of Hadassah.

Services were Wednesday, Feb. 6, at Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Meridian Hills Mortuary. Burial was in Indianapolis Hebrew North Cemetery.

Other survivors included her daughters, Terry L. Harvey and Karen E. Fielder; brother, Sanford Schwartz, and a grandson.

Memorial contributions may be made to American Cancer Society, Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation or Hooverwood Guild.

## Wilma Leventhal, 88, is mourned

Wilma "Bill" Goldberg Leventhal, 88, a businesswoman, died Saturday, Feb. 9.

Mrs. Leventhal was a graduate of Ohio State University. She worked at Daystand Trading Corp. until she retired in 1975.

She was a member of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation and its Sisterhood, Hooverwood Guild, National Council of Jewish Women and Hadassah.

Mrs. Leventhal was the widow of David Leventhal.

Survivors include her son, Richard A. Leventhal, her daughter, Barbara L. Gurwitz, and four grandchildren.

Services were Tuesday, Feb. 12 in Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Meridian Hills Mortuary. Burial was in Indianapolis Hebrew Cemetery South.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hooverwood Guild.

## Pauline Meshulam, Sephardic matriarch

Pauline Meshulam, who lived to be a great-great grandmother, died Thursday, Feb. 7, at age 101.

Mrs. Meshulam was a homemaker and the widow of Sam Meshulam.

She was a member of Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation and its Dvora Sisterhood and was a Gold Star Mother.

Services were Sunday, Feb. 10, in Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Meridian Hills Mortuary. Burial was in Etz Chaim Cemetery.

Survivors include daughters Rose Black and Rachel

Nahmias, son Jack Meshulam, 11 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hooverwood Guild or Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation.

The shiva week will be observed at the Black/Nahmias residence - 7214 Munsee Lane (one block east of Westlane Middle School). Shiva services at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla will be Sunday through Thursday night, Feb. 10-14, at 6:30 p.m. There will be no evening service at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla from Sunday through Thursday evening.

In memory of Mrs. Meshulam, kosher Sephardic pastries will be served after evening services. The Indianapolis Star captured her reputation as a great Sephardic cook in a 1981 article.

Mrs. Meshulam, matriarch of the Sephardic community of Indianapolis, was approaching her 102nd birthday at her death.

## Condolences

Congregation Shaarey Tefilla extends its condolences to Steve Nahmias, Sam Goldstein and their families upon the death of their beloved grandmother and great-grandmother, Pauline Meshulam. The congregation extends its deepest sympathy also to the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren of the Black, Meshulam, and Nahmias families.

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# Jewish Post & Opinion

## All to the good

It would seem that the situation in Israel will shortly be decided one way or another and that will be all to the good. As long as no decision can be reached then violence is inevitable as either side contends that its position is the only acceptable one.

That has been the situation these past several years and violence could only accompany it.

But both sides are now just about ready to come to the same conclusion — where is all this leading us?

At such a point there is only one resolution and that is to sit around a table for hours, or days if necessary, and reach the best kind of decisions that neither side favors but both sides can accept.

No logic can be proffered at this time as to why now is the time to reach agreements. But that is the way history works and the division of what is now Israel into two peoples, living side by side, could emerge in the very near future.

Time has a way of calling historical shots and time is just about ready to take action in the Israeli-Palestinian situation.

And that can be all to the good.

*(Editorial writer Cohen has a history of success in amateur and professional athletics and now seems to be claiming the same qualification in the prophetic area.)*

## Another such editorial

Since few American rabbis have taken up our challenge of advocating attendance at services at least once a month we believe there are a number of restraints that guide them, one of which probably is that advocating Sabbath service attendance of at least once a month is a disservice to Judaism, which obviously it is not because everyone would agree that as against not attending Sabbath services at all that even once a month attendance is a big gain.

Plus that once a month could develop into regular weekly Sabbath service attendance.

Then there is the objection that urging attendance at services once a month could become the norm. Against that view is the fact that Sabbath services have a certain warmth and satisfaction that almost every Jew who accepts such an attendance regime soon becomes a promoter of attendance every week at Sabbath services.

What perhaps our rabbis may not comprehend is that their membership may be just waiting for a challenge of attending Sabbath services.

We do not feel that a national Sabbath service attendance promotion would serve. No, it has to be promoted locally but as it builds up attendance at Sabbath services it automatically becomes a national effort and a national success.

So waiting for our national rabbinical organizations to launch a campaign for attendance at Sabbath services is not the way to go — it must be achieved on a local level. And various rabbis around the nation will achieve it and as attendance grows and grows it then becomes a national success.

We wait for a few rabbis to undertake this program on their own.

## Editor's Chair

We've received an invitation to attend the lecture of Fania Oz-Salzberger Jan. 10, 2002, at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem and would like to have attended, but we haven't been to Israel in a long time because whoever it is in the Israel Embassy in New York who does offer trips to Israel to journalists on the staffs of Jewish weekly publications must have misplaced our name.

The last time we were in Israel she had just won the Sinai desert and we were taken all the way across it to the Suez Canal so we could report about the as yet unmarked graves where bodies of Israeli soldiers had been buried and on various disabled large Israeli cannons and other military pieces that were gaining rust as the result of the intense fighting and what it was like to look at Egypt from this side of the Suez.

We can relate two reasons why we deserve to be accorded a journalist trip now by the Israel Tourist Agency.

One reverts as far back as only a few years after we launched the Post and Opinion in Louisville in 1930 when Zionism was not generally popular in the American Jewish community. A columnist for what was our founding paper then was involved part-time under the local federation in assisting newcomers from Europe as they accommodated themselves to their new home in Louisville and found their way into the activities of the local Jewish community.

He wrote a weekly column for us that could not but reveal his strong Zionist views at a time when anti-Zionism was rife and the substantial element of the leadership of the Jewish community considered it as in some way affecting the view of the general community about the allegiance of Jews to the United States only. They removed him from the effective work he was doing as punishment.

The other is our having been appointed as a member of the select committee to welcome Theodore Herzl when he was to make his first (and only) trip to the U.S.

So our Zionist credentials go way back, nor is it necessary to claim that we are the only editor of a U.S. Jewish publication one of whose sons has served three years in the Israel Army while another has a home in Kfar Habad and a third son, an internationally recognized scientist on the faculty of Yale University, was invited to deliver a lecture at the Weizmann Institute of Science.

So maybe it's our Zionist credentials that pre-

vent us now from being invited as a journalist once more to report on the many changes (advances) in Israel from the time since he was last a guest way back then.

We've challenged here our Jewish Community Centers to promote their exercise classes for the elderly and pointed out that while not every member over the age of 30 or 40 or 60 or 70 would then begin regular healthy workouts at least twice or more a week a number would and over time that number would grow and continue to do so.

While any conclusions about the health and accomplishments of the American Jewish community would almost automatically bring up some assets and some liabilities it can almost be predicted that the American Jewish community of the near future will not only be as healthy as an Olympic athlete but also even enjoying fully the rewards that Judaism bestows.

So why such an optimistic prediction at a time when our synagogues are practically empty on the Sabbath?

The Synagogue system is so very successful in every area except the one for which it was established — prayer services. So such a prediction would seem to be totally unwarranted.

But it isn't.

For that is precisely the time when miracles take place.

So in 10 years many synagogues may not be forced to enlarge their seating capacity as our prediction becomes reality but there is little question but that while attendance at services will not be overflowing it will be substantially increased and the norm today of not attending Sabbath services will have been replaced by one of so this is the Sabbath and we'll be going to services.

There is no substantial basis to support this prediction. Nor is there logic to explain it.

But one must have faith in miracles, and soon there will be general recognition that one has taken place in synagogue life.

And, as an aside, it could be that such a miracle would not be a reward to the Jewish community as a whole but, in fact, as a reward to the devotion of the American rabbinate.

## HOW TO KILL A BUSINESS IN TEN EASY STEPS

1. Don't advertise. Just pretend everybody knows what you have to offer.
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3. Don't advertise. Just assume everybody knows what you sell.
4. Don't advertise. Convince yourself that you've been in business so long customers will automatically come to you.
5. Don't advertise. Forget that there are new potential customers who would do business with you if they were urged to do so.
6. Don't advertise. Forget that you have competition trying to attract your customers away from you.
7. Don't advertise. Tell yourself it costs too much to advertise and that you don't get enough out of it.
8. Don't advertise. Overlook the fact that advertising is an investment in selling — not an expense.
9. Don't advertise. Be sure not provide an adequate advertising budget for business.
10. Don't advertise. Forget that you have to keep reminding your established customers that you appreciate their business.

*You decide... it's your business in good times or bad.*



## Israeli armed forces retake Joseph's Tomb

NABLUS, West Bank — Israeli armed forces have retaken a West Bank area that includes Joseph Tomb, which hard-line Israelis have been calling for their government to seize ever since it was evacuated in October 2000 following a two-day pitched battle in which six Palestinians and an Israeli border policeman were killed.

Israeli tanks entered the city of Nablus encountering heavy resistance. At least 20 tanks entered the city, and soldiers declared a curfew in the area, ordering Palestinians to stay in their houses, witnesses said.

It was the second incursion in two days. The previous day Israeli tanks, soldiers and armored personnel carriers entered another part of Nablus, seizing an apartment building overlooking the city. The military said they acted in response to several Palestinian attacks in the area.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon returned from talks in Washington where he told President Bush that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is responsible for the area's violence.

In other action, Israeli warplanes bombed a Palestinian security building near Arafat's headquarters in apparent retaliation for a shooting attack against Israel earlier.

Israel has confined Arafat to the West Bank city of Ramallah for two months, demanding that he arrest Palestinian militants.

The air strikes came hours after two Palestinian gunmen opened fire outside an Israeli military base in the southern city of Beersheba, killing two women soldiers and injuring five people before troops shot them dead.

## Economic crunch hits Hadassah national staff

NEW YORK — At the brink of celebrating its 90th anniversary, Hadassah laid off 10 percent of its headquarters staff here.

Hadassah officials told news media the move was a prudent and necessary fiscal one that won't hurt its programs.

Hadassah has 300,000 members and is the largest Zionist membership organization in the United States. Henrietta Szold founded Hadassah on Purim in 1912. The group is primarily known for its support of two hospitals in Israel, medical research, Jewish education and a youth movement.

The organization previously employed some 200 to 300 people at its headquarters, which also includes a heavily involved volunteer staff.

Among the departments that lost much of their professional staffs were those devoted to public affairs, Washington affairs and Israel, Zionist and international affairs, according to a report by the Jewish Telegraphic Association.

Ellen Marson, Hadassah's national executive director, said no programs were eliminated, and the remaining staff is expected to meet the same demands as before but declined to supply specific budget figures or losses due to a decline in market investments. She said there were no plans for additional layoffs at Hadassah house, the organization's headquarters, but that operations nationwide would be reviewed. She said the economy may dictate whether there might be budget cuts to Hadassah hospitals in Israel, but said the hospitals would be safe. She said she anticipated no decrease in the national office's support of social and activist groups around the nation.

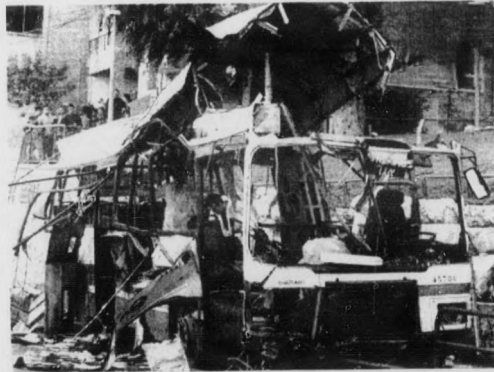
### In recognition

Doris Rubinstein, Richfield, Minn., has announced her candidacy for a seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives. She is an independent consultant in the area of corporate citizenship and philanthropy management.

Melinda Katz has been elected City Council member

of the 29th council district of Queens, N.Y.

Rabbi Menachem Gottesman, dean of the Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy, Beverly Hills, Calif., has been awarded the 2001 Jerusalem Prize for Religious, Communal and Educational Leadership.



THE BOMB AND THE BUS — This photograph clearly shows why people are killed when a terrorist sets off a bomb on a bus in Israel, tearing the vehicle to bits.

## British Jews suffer more, worse violence

LONDON — The number of violent incidents against British Jews is on the rise, says a survey published by the agency that provides security and defense advice for the Jewish community throughout the United Kingdom — Community Security Trust, or CST.

Data from the CST shows that following the Sept. 11 terror attacks, anti-Semitic incidents in Britain rose by 150 percent compared to August, with September and October constituting the second and third highest monthly totals ever recorded, The Jewish Chronicle of London reported.

Last year, 90 cases of vandalism against Jewish property were reported compared to 73 in 2000 and 25 in 1999. In addition, 301 attempts to harm Jews were reported, compared to 405 in 2000. A drastic jump in the number of incidents in October coincided with the outbreak of the intifada in Israel. The figures were 270 in 1999, and 236 in 1998.

The figures reflect a global trend of violence in the Middle East spurring attacks against the Jewish community in the Diaspora, according to Michael Whine, CST director of communications.

The incidents also are getting more serious, the survey indicates. Since 1999, while the number of incidents of abusive behavior has stayed relatively constant, the number of physical assaults on Jews has risen by 21 percent.

## UJC seen confusing so UJA may return

NEW YORK — The United Jewish Communities is considering changing its name.

The North American federation umbrella, which was created from the merger of three national Jewish organizations — United Jewish Appeal, United Israel Appeal and Council of Jewish Federations — is looking into calling itself the United Jewish Appeal, because that name is better known than UJC.

"You say UJA to people, they know what you're talking about," said James Tisch, the chairman of the board. "You say UJC and more often than not they don't know, unless you're talking to people that are into inside-the-park baseball."

Discussions are only in the early stages. Some federations oppose the idea, saying, among other things, that the UJA name may carry some negative associations for potential donors.

### Pulpit changes

Rabbi Rachel Rembrandt has joined Congregation Chevrei Tikva of Cleveland as its spiritual leader.

## Palestinian leader lobbying Powell

WASHINGTON — A top Palestinian official has asked Secretary of State Colin Powell for assurances that the Bush administration will not sever diplomatic contact with Yasser Arafat.

Ahmed Qureia, speaker of the Palestinian parliament, met first with Assistant Secretary of State William Burns.

With Ariel Sharon set to arrive in a few days for a meeting with Bush, the administration was still strongly insisting that Arafat do all he can to quell the violence.

Condoleezza Rice, the president's national security adviser, told "Fox News Sunday" the administration feels Arafat has not put forth a "100 percent effort" to rein in the terror.

Powell said on CBS' "Face the Nation" that Arafat "has to do a lot more to get the violence under control." But Powell also stated he will push for a Palestinian state on land held by Israel once the fighting is reduced.

Sharon was expected to ask the president to break with Arafat, but not with the Palestinian Authority.

## Bush, senior lauded by ADL

PALM BEACH, Florida — Former President George Bush accepted an Anti-Defamation League award here for his role in a "Operation Solomon," the 1991 airlift that brought Ethiopian Jews to Israel.

Bush used the occasion to urge people in the Middle East "to rise above ancient enmities" as he accepted the Joseph Prize for Human Rights from the Anti-Defamation League.

As president, Bush speeded the emigration of about 16,000 Ethiopian Jews by offering U.S. help in mediating Ethiopia's civil war as an incentive. He also persuaded rebels to stop advancing toward the capital until the Jews were safe.

## HUC-JIR states rabbi alumni totals

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has 2,516 rabbinic alumni, 344 of whom are women.



## Obituaries

### Gus Berenholz, elected twice

DETROIT — Gustav Berenholz, who served twice as president of Congregation B'nai David, died at the age of 83. A leading factor in the development of the Holocaust Memorial Center in West

Bloomfield, Mich., he was chairman of its executive committee.

As a young man in prewar Warsaw he played professional soccer.

### Alice Fredman succumbs at 71

CLEVELAND — Alice Newman Fredman, former president of the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education, who was serving as a member of the Citizen's Review Board of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, died at the age of

71. She had recently concluded her term as president of the Friends of the Aaron Garber Library, part of the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies and as president of the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education.

### Lionel S. Heller is being mourned

SAN BERNARDINO, Ca. — Lionel S. Heller died Jan. 15, at the age of 77.

He was a past president of Congregation Emanu El, past chairman of the San Bernardino United Jewish Fund, past-president of San Bernardino Downtown Rotary Club, past chair of Community Hospital of San Bernardino Endowment Fund. He was

owner of Gibson Bros. Janitorial Service serving the Southern California Inland Empire as a distributor of janitorial supplies.

He was often called on to serve as master of ceremonies at civic functions. He was a native of Hunter, N.Y., and a graduate of Syracuse University.

### Charles Maltz, of United Way

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tx. — Charles Maltz, past chairman of United Way who was honored in 1972 by the National Conference of Christians and

Jews and was a past president of B'nai B'rith, died at the age of 87. He reached the rank of captain in the U.S. Air Corps in World War II.

### Anne Miller, 91, of Cleveland

CLEVELAND — Anne Miller, known as THE "Grand Dame" of the Cleveland Jewish Community, died at the age of 91. Among her many honors was the Lifetime Achievement Award from the

Jewish Family Service Association, of which she had been the first female president.

A native of Iowa, she had been the first executive director of the Jewish Community Federation of Sioux City.

### Ira Waldbaum, grocery exec

NEW YORK — Ira Waldbaum who developed the nation's 12th largest supermarket chain, died at the age of 74. He lived in Delray Beach, Fla. and Old Westbury, N.Y.

### Jimmy Wisch, of Texas Jewish Post

FORT WORTH, Tx. — Jimmy Wisch, publisher of the Texas Jewish Post, died at the age of 88. He was a past president of the American Jewish Press Association.

He made 30 trips to Israel. He interviewed more presidents than any other Jewish journalist, among them John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter.

### Senator Wellstone closely challenged

ST. PAUL, Minn. — One of the nation's Jewish lawmakers, Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., faces a close challenge.

Former St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman officially launched his campaign for the Senate as a poll published in the Minneapolis Star Tribune found Wellstone favored by 45 percent and Coleman by 44 percent. The Minnesota race is being watched closely in Washington because of the slight edge — one vote — the Democrats hold in the Senate.

## Hitler's secretary ends her silence

BERLIN — A new documentary released here has one of Hitler's secretaries speaking for the first time on film about her three years serving him while his Nazis were killing most of Europe's Jews.

Traudl Junge, 81 and ailing, said Hitler and other Nazi leaders "practically never mentioned the word Jew" during scores of meetings she attended. She recalls life in Hitler's inner circle as a "harmless and peaceful atmosphere" — except during the final days when the Red Army moved in on his Berlin bunker and Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

She applied for the secretary job at age 22 and she said it was only after the war that she learned what many already knew, and became wracked with guilt for having liked the "greatest criminal who ever lived."

The documentary is titled "Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary," and was presented at the Berlin International Film Festival.

The film shows an elegant, white-haired Junge lucidly recalling in an interview in her one-room Munich apartment the events more than 50 years ago.

Austrian director Andre Heller culled 10 hours of interviews for the 90-minute film.

Throughout her time with Hitler, Junge says Nazi leaders did not discuss Jews or the Holocaust in her presence or in the presence of other secretaries. The only reference she heard to concentration camps, she said, came from SS chief Heinrich Himmler, who said they were "being managed very skillfully."

"I have finally let go of my story," she said. "Now I feel the world is letting go of me."

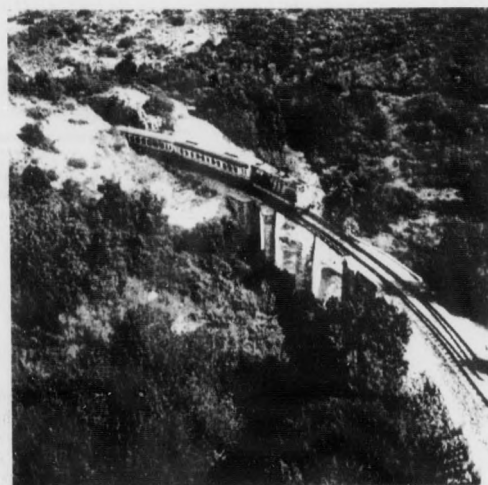
## Court sentences terrorist to 26 life prison terms

JERUSALEM — An Israeli military court has sentenced a Palestinian to 26 consecutive life terms for planning two deadly suicide bombings in Jerusalem in 1997.

Muaid Said, 31, was sentenced to one life term for each of the 21 Israelis killed and one for each of the five Palestinian bombers who died in the attacks.

He was also convicted of belonging to and serving in an enemy organization, trying to kidnap a soldier and attempting an additional bombing. He was sentenced to 25 years on those charges.

Said told the court the bombings were a "natural reaction" to what he called the Israeli government's crimes against the Palestinian people.



CREDIT THE JNF — Photos of Israel usually reveal tree-barren vistas, but that is because current photos like this one have as yet to become generally published. This train is travelling from Tel Aviv to Beersheba.

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## Media Watch

### 'Royal Tenenbaums' a curious parody

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

"The Royal Tenenbaums," an immensely popular film comes across as a parable, but it is really a parody. For some reason it sets its sights on



good middle class values, largely, at one time, identified with the Jewish family, and mocks them.

Etheline Tenenbaum (Anjelica Huston) is the mother who invests herself totally in developing her children's talents (at least while they are young), urging both success, ambition and liberal values: Her children are indeed prodigies—Chas (Ben Stiller) an immediate business mogul; Margot (Gwyneth Paltrow), whose adopted status is invoked ad nauseam, an overnight successful playwright; and Richie (Luke Wilson) an instant tennis champion.

Yet each offspring must survive an unraveling of quick and complete success. Chas spends his days ducking any possible disaster that might befall him or his children, having become unnerved after his wife dies in a plane crash. Margot marries the proverbial doctor, but, interestingly, not a Jewish doctor, and despairs constantly while soaking in the bathtub. And Richie spends his time cruising on ocean steamers, having shut down on the tennis courts after winning several prestigious tournaments.

The implication somewhere in all this is that these troubled young adults need their father, who cheated on their mother and abandoned the family long ago. Dad, who is a disbarred attorney with jail terms to show for his chicaneries, is being evicted from the fancy residential hotel where he has done whatever he has pleased for many years. What is more, he learns that his estranged wife may marry her African American accountant (Danny Glover). So, in order to find shelter and maybe acceptance in the

quirky but comfortable urban family manse, he feigns terminal illness. His designs are rewarded, at least for a while, when his wife takes pity on him and when his children, for respective reasons of their own, return home for reflection and, it is hoped, for renewal.

Writer/director Wes Anderson and co-writer Owen Wilson (who plays an old friend of the children with more sustained, but bizarre, successes) have offered this antithesis to *Father Knows Best* with a wink and a grin. Many audiences anticipate an offbeat nod to *You Can't Take It with You* with some sort of Jewish, that is,

At the cemetery, where a lot of the action and bonding takes place, we learn (from a headstone, of course) that Royal's mother was Helen O'Reilly Tenenbaum. As Royal puts it, "I'm half Hebe, but the children are three-quarters Mick." Etheline is a stereotype of liberal prodding mothers who could well be Jewish, if one goes by further stereotypes.

Could the dysfunctional family that Anderson and Wilson celebrate, and make the butt of many a laugh, represent the ill effects on a Jewish family in the absence of an involved Jewish father with a strong sense of identity? Af-

*Could the dysfunctional family that Anderson and Wilson celebrate, and make the butt of many a laugh, represent the ill effects on a Jewish family in the absence of an involved Jewish father with a strong sense of identity? After all, a lot of things that go on here are not pretty and bespeak a devastating fissure in the family structure. We do know who is responsible for the breach, and whose attentions, however awkward and self-serving, inaugurate the mending process, however difficult. Is this film a backhanded compliment to Jewish fathers? And if so, for what reason and by what motive?*

Tenenbaum, flavor. And they are not disappointed. In fact, they roar at the flakiness and fragility of the over-cultivated, over-talented Jewish men, father as well as sons.

Chas has named his sons, Ari and Uzzi. They actually cement a tenuous but genuine new bond between father Royal (Gene Hackman) and his three children. The Hebrew names are not lost on many of the viewers. But it's all a tease.

ter all, a lot of things that go on here are not pretty and bespeak a devastating fissure in the family structure.

We do know who is responsible for the breach, and whose attentions, however awkward and self-serving, inaugurate the mending process, however difficult. Is this film a backhanded compliment to Jewish fathers? And if so, for what reason and by what motive?



### Quotation of the week

By RABBI SHARON COHEN

I have to admit that it has taken me a long time to enjoy the holiday of Purim.

Yes, it is hard to believe that a rabbi could admit such a thing, but it is indeed true! I suppose as a young child I enjoyed dressing up in a costume, shaking the gregger, and eating hamantaschen like any self-respecting Jewish child. As a teenager and young adult, however, I figured I had outgrown the antics of the holiday. After all, the story upon which Purim is based is exactly that—a story, with little, if any, basis in factual history.

Who needs to dress up like a queen, anyway? And what is so great about saying "boo" to some bad guy's name? Don't we have other holidays during which we give gifts to each other and to the poor? We don't need Purim for that. Purim is just for the little kids, or those with little kids—or so I thought.

It was not until my first year as a rabbi that I really came to appreciate the full value of the holiday of Purim. From a rabbinic standpoint, I learned quickly that organizing and running the Megila reading on Purim is a lesson in stamina and choreography. Organized chaos is what we in the rabbinate like to call it! It is quite a challenge to make sure that the Megila is properly read while allowing synagogue decorum to be joyfully overturned. In comparison, the High Holy Days are a snap! (Okay, maybe not a snap, but, hopefully, you get what I mean!)

But, what I really discovered was that while Purim is considered a minor holiday on the Jewish calendar it is a holiday that is anything but minor in meaning, for it deals with one of the most serious subjects in life: laughter.

Laughter is serious business. Laughter gives us the tools needed to get through the difficult times of life with dignity. Levity can raise the spirit and help one find a new perspective on an old situation. Researchers have found that laughter can have a significant impact upon improving one's health (it seems the old cliché: "laughter is the best medicine" is true!). We know that being able to laugh at oneself is vital to maintaining a healthy ego. Thus, finding reasons to laugh in life is of the utmost priority.

Purim is the Jewish celebration of the spirituality of laughter. It compels us to be happy by asking us to turn the world on its ear for a day. We don masks and costumes and pretend to be someone else. We study a story that's nothing short of a farce—filled with laughable characters, irony, and whim. We are even bidden to imbibe—enough to confuse the righteous Mordecai and the evil Haman.

On any other day, we are admonished to sit with dignity in the synagogue and absorb the wisdom of our Scriptures and the insights of our rabbis. On Purim, we constantly interrupt the reading of a Biblical book with noisemakers as the usual decorum of prayer is replaced with revelry.

I find it nothing short of brilliant that our tradition demands that we take seriously a holiday of laughter. So important is this holiday of laughter to our spiritual balance, the rabbis taught that when the Messianic Era arrives, all of our holidays will be abrogated except for Purim. Even a world perfected needs laughter in it.

When Purim arrives this year (on Monday evening, Feb. 25) be sure to take seriously its prescription for laughter and fun. Put on a costume or funny hat and look in the mirror and smile. Come to OZS and enjoy the Megila reading as we "boo" Haman and cheer for Esther and Mordecai. Join with family and friends in preparing and distributing gifts so that you can share your laughter and happiness with others. (*Shalach Manon*—giving gifts and *Matanot L'evyonim*—gifts to the poor—are important mitzvot on Purim).

Purim Sameach—May your Purim be filled with serious laughter and serious fun!

Rabbi Cohen serves Ohavay Zion Synagogue, Lexington, KY.

### Hero bank guard stressed

LOS ANGELES—A Swiss bank watchman, Christoph Meili was lauded as a hero five years ago when he prevented a Swiss bank destroying evidence of assets withheld from Holocaust-survivors.

Now Meili, 23, is recovering from hard times.

He and his wife are separated. She has filed for di-

vorce.

He has spent some time in jail because of domestic violence.

Meili says what he thought were promises of large financial compensation have not materialized.

But he says he would blow the whistle again if given the same choice.



# As I Heard It

## Zim Purim CD joyous, well done

By MORTON GOLD

It seems everything is earlier than usual this year. Purim is just around the corner and it doesn't really feel like spring yet.



Purim is a holiday for "children of all ages" and a particularly happy Jewish one at that (unless you are a fan of that archvillain Haman or any of his modern day counterparts.) Purim is our version of Mardi Gras; one is supposed to go to services in costume. We cheer Mordechai and Esther and hiss, hiss, hiss the villain Haman.

Accordingly there are many songs, all happy, snappy, "up-beat" ones to mark the occasion. Among the many recordings sent to me a while ago by (Cantor) Paul Zim there is a cassette called fittingly enough a "Purim Sing-A-Long." It features the voice of Zim, assisted by the Williamsburgh Minyan Men's

Choir with the music "arranged, orchestrated and conducted by Jonathan Rimberg. The instrumentalists are not identified. I discerned a trumpet, accordion, snare drum and synthesizer and xylophone.

The cassette, number 31695 is released by Simcha Records. The credits, with English, Hebrew and English transliterations, are included with the cassette. There are 11 selections—six on the first side and five on the second.

The first side begins with a kind of instrumental overture (A Little Purim Music) which consists of "Lichvod Purim and Shoshanat Ya'akov." The material is jovial and the arrangement of this material is perfectly appropriate.

The first vocal selection "Mishenichanas Adar" is a traditional Purim song. We first hear the sonorous voice of Zim with the Minyan Men's Choir. While their collective voices are somewhat less than sonorous, they do sing the right notes at the right time and do so with spirit and joy. The only drawback is that Zim is often forced to sing at the lowest part of his range to accommodate the ranges of his choral group.

The next selection is an arrangement of "Chag Purim." This is a folk song with the lyrics by L. Kipnis. This then leads to a rendition of "Ani Purim" without any pause. The music to this song is by Nahum Pardi with lyrics again by Kipnis. In the previous song the chorus is limited to a few hearty "Rash, Rash, Rashes" while in the latter to joining in for a few friendly la-la-la's. One hopes that even the most novice or reluctant singer will be happy to join them.

The fourth selection is a song called "Grammen for Purim" with no composer credited and lyrics by S. Rockoff. There are an awful lot of la, la's here. Again, it is hoped that even if you cannot manage most of the lyrics, or even the melody that you will "catch on" to the la-la-la's, so infectious are they. This charming song tells the story of Purim and is both educational and musically worthwhile. By golly, "La-la-la-la-La-La-La!"

The fifth selection is the folksong "Utzu Etza" arranged by Zim. It receives a fine rendition and the arrangement is excellent as well.

We next here a fine addition to the Purim literature. It is called "La'y'hudim Ha'y'ta Ora" and was composed by Ben Zion Shenker. The only problem I can see is trying to get all the words out in time!

On the second side we hear the song "Purim Lanu," with music by D. Abikzer. This tune has a decided Sephardic or Greek influence. This is merely an observation. As far as I can tell, it receives a fine performance by Zim. If the Sephardic influence is strong in this selection, the Israeli influence is great in the song "Al Hanisim" arranged by J. Rimberg. The Minyan Singers join in the chorus of this rousing song.

The third selection on side two is "Oh Today We'll Merry, Merry Be." This familiar folk song has lyrics "amended" by S. Rockoff and I will not spoil your fun by revealing the few witty changes he made in the lyrics most people know. The orchestration is particularly effective in this selection.

Fourth on this side is another familiar song, "I Love The Day of Purim" with

words and music by S. Goldfarb. I must observe that Zim recalls sounds especially well in this selection and the one that follows. He is singing in his best register. His singing is assured, relaxed, lyrical with nothing forced and in short, it is a pleasure to listen to him here in particular.

The fifth selection is the familiar "Shoshanot Ya'akov" adapted by H. Coopersmith. The vocal chorale joins Zim in this.

The last selection is another setting of "Mishenichanas" with music here by T. Silbermintz. It has the same

words as the first setting but different music. This is a very pleasant tune, but again to accommodate his choral group Zim is forced to sing in the lowest register of his voice. One understands his need to do so, but the vocal results are not necessarily worth it.

Still, all in all, one can honestly state that this is a delightful cassette. It contains new as well as traditional Purim songs. If one knows or even if one is not familiar with these songs, the performances more than justify acquiring this cassette, either for oneself or for others as a Purim gift. It is definitely recommended.

## About Books

By JACK FISCHER

Because of its title, I was initially turned off by *Thoughts from a Queen-Sized Bed*, by Mimi Schwartz, but as I browsed through the book I

Jennifer Felicia Abadi. All recipes found in this appetizing book are kosher and many are suitable for the Jewish holidays, (one recipe the author includes is for flourless pistachio cookies, which are perfect for Passover). Harvard Common (March, \$24.95).

An interesting new title that appeared this month is *Jews Without Judaism: Conversations with an Unconventional Rabbi*, by Rabbi Daniel Friedman. The rabbi deals with such questions as should Jews marry outside their faith, and if so, what are the likely consequences? How should Jews cope with anti-Semitism, and can one be Jewish without a belief in God? Prometheus (this month, \$20).

The late Isaac Asimov's autobiography has been published by Prometheus and is titled *Isaac Asimov: It's been a Good Life*. The book was edited by his wife, Janet Jeppson Asimov (March, \$25).

Yale University Press will publish in March *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939-1944*, by Herman Kruk, edited and introduced by Benjamin Harshav, translated by Barbara Harshav. (\$39.95).

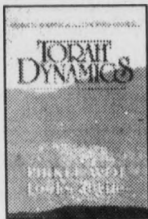


began to gain interest and soon I finished reading it.

The book is a series of essays in which the author describes what it means to be married for almost 40 years. The tome is funny as the author writes about growing up in an immigrant Jewish family, coming of age in New York in the 1950s, and subsequently marrying her high school beau. Schwartz's essays are wise and warm without being sentimental. The author is a professor of writing at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. University of Nebraska Press (this month, \$22).

As we slowly approach Purim and Passover, I also recommend *A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian-Jewish Recipes from Grandma Fritzie's Kitchen*, by

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## Milk, Honey & Vinegar

### Wanted: more Americans

By JUDY CARR

Living in a country where many people have little money, where many go without, makes for generosity, even if you only have a little more.

A friend took some money and gifts to an elderly lady who has very little to live on. In the past she worked and had plenty. Now illness and old age have overtaken her, but her friends still love her.

I do not have much money to give away, although I live comfortably. But I can take a chicken to a senior citizen who does not eat chicken all that often.

People abroad do not understand this Israeli characteristic. My own mother died not understanding it. "What do you mean by sharing your money?" she asked me once suspiciously.

Bad tales are heard. A widow living with a child and an elderly mother cannot make her salary and small government allowance stretch until the end of the month. They cannot afford the supermarket. The mother has hunted out a small shop that lets them owe until the end of the month. They are constantly in debt, with a rising amount of interest. The widow describes herself as in a state of nerves and worry.

Prof. Eliezer Jaffe, a leading authority on social work, describes the poverty trap, often with single parent families. He told of a single mother who will do anything for a living, clean floors, scrub. Her

By JUDY CARR

This article from *City Lights*, the Tel Aviv supplement of *The Jerusalem Post*, highlights a horrendous matter – children going hungry from one small breakfast to the other.

I've already written about the Haifa Food Center, which distributes meals, asking readers of the *Jewish Post and Opinion* to contribute. Readers will now see how vast this problem is.

If you wish to contribute further, send checks to The Mayor of Haifa, Haifa Municipality, Haifa, Israel, with an enclosed note saying the money is to feed hungry Haifa children you have read about in an article by Judy Carr in the *Jewish Post and Opinion*.

Thank you.

#### Haifa 2002: Hundreds of children go hungry

The Hebrew weekly *Zman Haifa*, reports that in response to its expose last week, the city, the Education Ministry and other official bodies were appealing to food suppliers and manufacturers to donate supplies for the city's hungry children.

Last week the weekly revealed that children at the Shalva Elementary School often came to their classrooms hungry.

Further examination of the problem by Education Ministry district head Aharon Zvida discovered that there are literally hundreds of hungry kids.

Next week, thanks to a joint venture by Zvida and the Sephardic community, the first 100 kids will get fed breakfast at school – a roll, chocolate milk and some fruit.

The kids in question live in disadvantaged or low socioeconomic areas such as Bat Galim, hadar Elyon and Kiryat Eliezer. To date, no hungry children have been discovered in the Carmel or Neve Sha'anani neighborhoods.

Zvida and the city are also organizing the distribution

child said to her, "Mother, will we ever get out of this poverty?"

There seems no way to rise, to get a better job, to progress with education and diplomas, as there is in America. I heard that in America you can find your own company. Here few people do this. It is too difficult.

Do I discourage you from

coming here, American? Perhaps you can come and help and raise the level and create work. What Israel needs is more Americans, with a brighter way of thinking.

Meanwhile, the poverty continues and only gets worse.

Judy Carr may be reached at POB 6431, Tel Aviv, mx 61063 Israel.

### Novel limns Israel's birth pangs

Review by FRANK ROSENTHAL

When I Lived in Modern Times, by Linda Grant, Plume/Penguin, N.Y., 2000, 260 pp., pb.

A Jewish girl, born and raised in London, goes to Palestine in 1946. She spends a short time on a kibbutz, where she is shocked by the directness, often verging on rudeness, of the sabras and is numbed by the unrelenting labor and lack of privacy.

Evelyn realizes communal pioneer life is not for her. She rents an apartment in Tel Aviv, then the "white city" of Bauhaus architects, and goes to work in a Jewish-owned hair salon whose clients are the proper wives of English colo-

nial administrators, policemen and army officers for whom Jews and Arabs are just natives.

Her boyfriend is a member of the Irgun, her neighbors are German refugees, "Jekkes," and her British clients know her as the wife of an inspector on extended duty. She takes part in the struggle for the creation of the new state, goes into hiding to avoid arrest, and eventually returns to England and middle class propriety.

Grant describes the conflicting attitudes, prejudices and hatreds that convulsed Palestine, leading to the with-

drawal of the British and to the war between the new Israel and its Arab neighbors. Except for the last chapters of the book, which are rather contrived, the novel succeeds in re-creating the chaos and confusion of these years.

"I felt as if we were all half here and half somewhere else. We knew that we were to be remade and reborn, and we half did and half didn't want to be. We were caught up in a plan to socially engineer our souls. We would all be poured, like so many alloys in the melting pot of immigrant life, to emerge as molten, liquid, golden Jewish humanity."

## Berlin Diary

### Don't drink the water

By ALLEN PODET

February 13, 2002

CAIRO — The water in Egypt is a problem. Even the hotels and the fancy cruise ship we took posted signs ad-



vising against drinking the water. Use only bottled water, even (or especially) in restaurants of even high quality, we were told.

What we were not told was that the glass into which the bottled water is poured was washed with normal house water. The plates and flatware were washed in the same water. It is extremely difficult to come back from Egypt without Akhenaten's Revenge. Just be prepared with medications to insure it is a mild case.

The bazaars are everything the movies make them out to be. I enjoyed a sheeshah, the Egyptian hookah, or waterpipe, at a scuzzy looking place and had to be steered home. Long time since I smoked. Will be a long time until I smoke again. The sheeshahs are beautiful, however, real artworks.

There are so many temples, statues, and monuments in Egypt that, as Valerie Jill put it, one becomes templed out, just as in Europe one becomes cathedraled out. The unbelievable man-hours that went into stone-carving, hieroglyphic carving, and careful painting are beyond calculation.

Not all of it is in sandstone. Some of it is in massive granite or basaltic rock, workable only with the hardest possible tools and endless elbow grease. And every bit of it perfect, as befits work for a living God. Imagine making a mistake on the last hieroglyphic of an obelisk.

The pyramids at Giza, a suburb of Cairo just across the river, are something I never thought to see, touch, or climb a few steps upon. The internal architecture, rooms above and below the entrance level, belies the simplicity of the out-

side form.

We did not, by the way, build the pyramids. Working on the pyramids was a great honor. Only the highest nobles were invited to build the pyramids (meaning, of course, that their slaves got to do the work while the nobles got the honor). We built the store cities, Pithom and Raameses. The pyramids are still as they were, magnificent monuments to the drive for immortality.

The Sphinx, however, has not weathered well. Her nose has been chopped off by Arabs offended at the idolatry, or just having fun perhaps. It is a curious truth that the natives, who, after all, grow up with such monuments, historically have paid them little respect.

Lord Elgin purchased the marble reliefs from the Acropolis because the natives were using them for target practice (at least that was his account). Since tourism has sanctified the sphinx as a money-maker, no locals will damage it, but it has been quite adequately damaged already.

Two themes recur in all the massive statuary throughout the country: Isis and Rameses II.

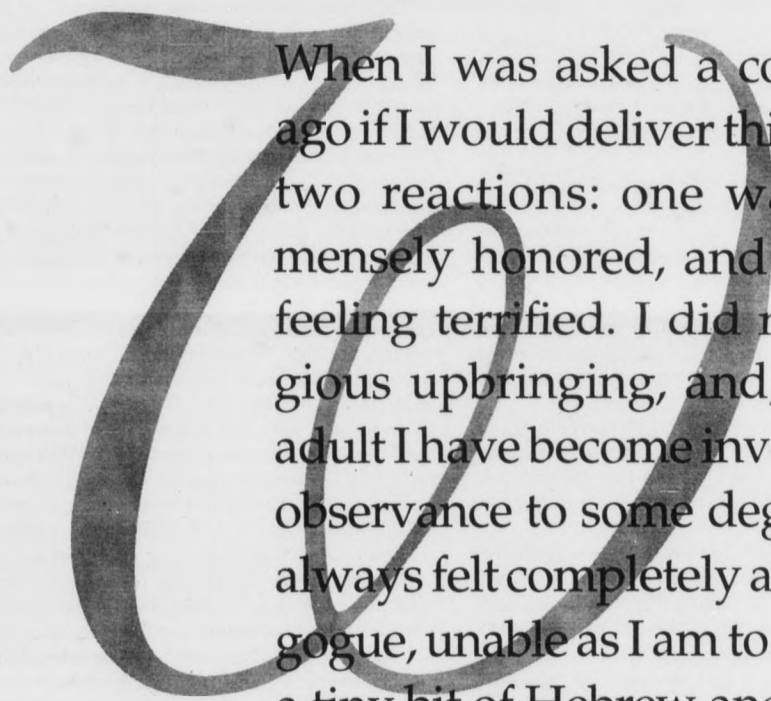
Isis was the bride of Osiris, whose evil brother Set (shades of Cain and Abel) murdered him out of envy. Isis was able to bring him to life. He was a God, after all. But his brother chopped him up into 14 pieces and scattered them. Isis, with the help of crocodile and raven, was able to recover only 13 of them. You know, of course, which piece she could not find (ask Lorena Bobbitt).

So he could not return here, but he waits to judge us in the next world. Meanwhile, Isis and her son, Horus, rule here for him, helping people to resist the devil Set.

The holy pair are frequently shown as mother and babe in statuary, which is so like Madonna and Christ-child scenes as to be virtually identical. One cannot help thinking that the soldiers and officers of the world-wide Roman army rotated through Egypt, and the Isis cult must, through them, have influenced early Christianity

Continued on page 13

# How to not vanish



When I was asked a couple of weeks ago if I would deliver this sermon, I had two reactions: one was feeling immensely honored, and the other was feeling terrified. I did not have a religious upbringing, and, though as an adult I have become involved in Jewish observance to some degree, I have not always felt completely at ease in a synagogue, unable as I am to read more than a tiny bit of Hebrew and having only a few years' acquaintance with the rituals.

**By Thomas  
Kovach**

If I were not always comfortable as a congregant, imagine my feelings about delivering a sermon!



Further complicating the matter was the fact that, being an academic rather than a member of the clergy, I am not really comfortable discussing the themes of this occasion — sin and atonement — in a public setting. The fact that public atonement for private sins has been so much a part of our public discourse in recent weeks makes me feel even less like adding to that discussion.

But in American Judaism in recent years, Yom Kippur sermons are just as likely to discuss the theme of maintaining Jewish identity in a non-Jewish world, and this is a subject I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on, especially in recent years. Accordingly, I decided that perhaps I could share some reflections with all of you that might be of some interest after all.

My parents were refugees from Europe — Austria and Hungary — who arrived in the U.S. in 1939. Both were raised in highly assimilated families. As children, they had a family seder and attended synagogue at least occasionally on the High Holy Days. My father was bar mitzvah in Vienna; my mother even had a bat mitzvah in Budapest in the 1920s!

But they also celebrated Christmas and were raised to feel that they were Austrians or Hungarians who happened to be of the Jewish faith, not that they were Jews who happened to be living in those countries. The culture they passed on to me was essentially German, characterized by classical music, which was constantly present in our home, and the German literary tradition, which I heard about while growing up and which I ended up studying and teaching as an adult.

But, as everyone here knows, there is something wrong with this picture. My parents, along with hundreds of thousands of other Central European Jews, were raised with the belief that they belonged fully to the peoples among whom they lived. But this belief, at least in the eyes of many, was shown in Auschwitz to be a cruel delusion.

So I was raised with an unresolved paradox: the people who gave the world the music of Beethoven, Bach, and Brahms, the music that moves me still like no other art, also produced the murderers of my grandfather and several other family members.

In recent years at the University of Arizona, as I have taught a course on German-Jewish writers, I have been grappling with these issues professionally as well as personally. And here the paradox of which I was dimly aware on a personal level was writ large in the scroll of history.

What some have called the German-Jewish symbiosis produced giants of world literature, like Heinrich Heine and Franz Kafka, and world-shaping thinkers like Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein; but it was the inability of the German nation to fully accept these "aliens" in their midst, regardless of their willingness, even eagerness, to assimilate, that produced the most horrendous genocide.

In the wake of the Shoah, the term assimilation has become suspect in the eyes of many Jews. Certainly it is true that many German and Central European Jews were all too ready to abandon their distinctive identity — sometimes to the point of conversion, sometimes even to the point of exhibiting various forms of Jewish self-hatred. There is a belief, widely shared and occasionally articulated, that by abandoning their identity, these Jews somehow brought on their own fate. The fact that the same fate befell the far less assimilated Jews of Eastern Europe, and in far greater numbers, does not seem to alter this belief.

But the prejudice goes both ways. If there was and is some resentment directed at these assimilated Jews by the less assimilated, it is equally true that the German Jews displayed a good deal of antagonism toward the Russian and Polish Jews, precisely because

they were not sufficiently "European." To me, the mutual incomprehension and even hostility between the assimilated Jews of Western and Central Europe and the less assimilated of Eastern Europe, even as they shared a similar fate under the Nazis, is one of the saddest aspects of this tragic time.

For us in the U.S., assimilation is often more than suspect; it is regarded as a curse or even a sin. At the Rosh Hashanah morning service I attended, the "sanetokef" prayer contained the following passage: "On Rosh Hashanah it is written, / On Yom Kippur it is sealed / Who shall stand out as a Jew, / And who shall fade away and assimilate." But is it helpful, is it even realistic, to make an opposition between "standing out as a Jew" and assimilating?

The neighborhood I first lived in after my move to Tucson, just two miles east of campus, is shared during the winter months by a community of Satmar Hasidim, who return there every year because their rebbe once sought relief from his ailments here in Tucson. During these months I had the opportunity to observe people and scenes that transported me to an earlier day in Eastern Europe, or to Mea She'arim in Jerusalem or to Brooklyn today.

These Hasidim come to mind as I speak, for they, I would assert, are the only Jews in the U.S. for whom assimilation is not an issue. They are subject to the laws of the land, they have the right to vote, and they most likely have some business dealings with the non-Jewish world; but, other than this, their language, culture, and social norms, as well as their religious practices, are entirely Jewish. Clearly, they have far more in common with Hasidim elsewhere in the world than they do with their neighbors.

All the rest of us, certainly all of us attending this Conservative service at the University of Arizona Hillel, are connected with and affected by the culture and society in which we live in important ways. I venture to guess that not too many people in this room will join with the Hasidim or with the ultra-Orthodox in Israel. So the question is not whether or not we will assimilate but, rather, how we can balance that assimilation with a continued, and even strengthened, sense of Jewish identity.

In the U.S. the dangers that beset us as Jews are of a very different kind than those facing the Jews of Europe 60 years ago. Here the danger is not non-acceptance but, rather, an acceptance so complete that we are in danger of losing our identity entirely. Many writers, among them Alan Dershowitz in his recent book, *The Vanishing American Jew*, have documented the facts that threaten Jewish survival, such as increasing intermarriage, with the offspring of these marriages all too often receiving no Jewish upbringing.

Occasionally there is movement in the other direction. I recall some friends of my family, secular Jews like ourselves, whose son decided to study to become a Hasidic rabbi. His mother wept and moaned over this choice in much the same way, I imagine, that her own grandmother would have done had her son decided to marry a gentile! But history teaches us clearly that assimilation, for Jews as well as other minority groups, has by and large tended to be a one-way street.

So, what is the solution? At the risk of sounding provocative, one example that we as American Jews might turn to is that of the country which has most often served as a negative example for Jews — Germany! Some of you may be aware that Germany is the site of what is now the world's fastest-growing Jewish community. Most of the new arrivals are from the former Soviet Union. But many are Jews whose parents a generation ago, for whatever reasons, decided to settle there.

The writers among them spend a fair amount of time berating their *meshugenh* parents for making them grow up in the land of  
*Continued on next page*

# Digest of the Yiddish Press

## New N.Y. community center coming

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

An imposing 10-story building is being completed on New York City's west side, where 100,000 Jews live.

It will be the equivalent of



the onetime "kehillah" housing outlets for activities of all Jewish groups religious and cultural. Under one roof, explains Itzic Gottesman in the Forward, intellectuals and religionists, social workers and culinary experts will offer services to all and sundry.

In that outsize Jewish community center courses in cooking will be offered, as well as lectures and art exhibits. It will serve those familiar with Yiddish or Hebrew as well as English.

The article contains a photo of the center's huge library. On the first page of the Forward is a shot of the towering edifice.

## New word coined

There's a new Jewish word in the *Algemeiner Journal*.

Actually, it's two versions of the same term. The versions

are "terroristin" and "terroristike." The reference is to a new first, an Arab female suicide bomber who struck Jerusalem in January, killing one man and wounding many people as she blew herself up.

The New York Times identified the woman as Waifa Idris, a 28-year-old divorcee.

## Hope in Russia

There it stands in Moscow: evidence that the era of Russian anti-Semitism has ended: a high statue of the Yiddish writer, Shalom Aleichem.

Its pedestal is in the shape of a Torah scroll on which the names of some of the characters in the writer's stories are inscribed.

## Twain's homage

The real name of the popular writer (1859-1916) was Shalom Rabinowitz. He changed it because he wanted his name to be spoken every time two Jews met.

The story in the *Algemeiner Journal* reports that there was a meeting between Aleichem and Mark Twain.

Twain is supposed to have said, "I'm the American Shalom Aleichem," to which Aleichem responded, "And I am the Jewish Mark Twain."

The sculptor of the impressive

*Continued on next page*

# Making the mundane holy

Reviewed by RABBI SAM SILVER

*The Book of Sacred Jewish Practices. CLAL's Guide to Everyday and Holiday Rituals and Blessings. Edited by Rabbi Irwin Kula and Vanessa L. Ochs. Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, VT 336 pp. \$18.95.*

Two rabbis observe a blacksmith wearing a tallit. Said one: "How dreadful. He desecrates a holy garment." Said the other, "How wonderful. Even while working he is mindful of God's admonitions."

Yes, prayers can be offered at synagogue services, at holiday celebrations and in the observance of life-cycle events. But godliness can also be ascertained and invoked in mundane activities such as welcoming guests in our home, falling in love, sending a child to Israel, and running a marathon.

The thesis of this innovative book is that we can spiritualize mundane activities. Over 100 activities are listed and we are given a script for the way to elevate them to the sphere of holiness.

These methods are the result of cogitations and creativity over the course of decades by that remarkable think tank called the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, a consortium in Manhattan of rabbis and Jewish scholars of all denominations. My coinage for this melange is "Reconformadox."

CLAL was founded by that Orthodox ecumenist, Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg. He and twenty-one others are listed as the authors of some of the glittering statements in the book. We are not told which authors are the fashioners of each statement. But they represent a gifted ensemble.

The contents of this book will engender new customs.

For example, it is a tradition in Jewish life for parents to bless their children. In this book we have a blessing of parents by children. The material comes under eleven rubrics, such as Everyday Life, Relationships, Healing, Life and Death, Leadership and Communal Life, et al.

To exemplify the contents of the book let me give you some of the text of that rubric called "Quitting Smoking."

It begins with a Hebrew phrase, in large type: "Matir Asurim," followed by a transliteration and a

translation: "He who frees the captives." Then a tale of a rabbi who, after many efforts,

succeeded in giving up snuff sniffing. Then a Meditation:

*Continued on page 12*

## Vanish

*Continued from prev. page*

their people's murderers. But most have stayed, because for better or for worse, German is their language and Germany is the only home they have known. What they have done is nothing less than to create a new kind of Jewish-German identity.

Many, if not most, regard themselves as Jews first and Germans second. All have learned from the mistakes of the German Jews before them, and virtually none of them hold on to the notion that their Jewish identity is a fact of no significance. In addition, they have earned a place of admiration and respect in their society, in spite of their still relatively small numbers.

Of course, we American Jews do not have the "advantage" of looking at elderly neighbors and wondering if they participated in the murder of our grandparents. But we can learn from the courage of these Jews in Germany today, their sheer determination to create a new identity for themselves and demand that it be recognized by their fellow Germans. Certainly one crucial element in the growth of that community is the strength of their religious institutions and their determination to provide

a Jewish education for their children.

This brings me to a truth that even a more or less secular Jew like myself has to face: the most important, ultimately, the only reason the Jews have survived as a people for thousands of years, has been the continuity of our religious tradition. So in coming together as we do on this holiest of days to proclaim our sense of belonging to this community and this tradition, we make our small contribution to the continuance of our people.

But perhaps coming together once a year is not enough. At this point, let me remind you and reassure you that I am not a rabbi, and I am not about to deliver a pitch for you to come to synagogue more often, or to give more generously. Rather, I challenge each one of you in the coming year to reflect about what your Jewishness means to you and to find ways this year and in the years to come to cultivate and reinforce for your friends and your children the strength and richness that being a Jew has brought into your life.

Dr. Kovach heads the department of German studies in the College of Humanities of the University of Arizona.

## Misconceptions

### Hygiene isn't the point

By RABBI REUVEN BULKA

*Misconception: The practice of washing one's hands before eating bread at the beginning of a meal is to clean the hands.*

The obligation to wash



one's hands prior to a meal applies even to individuals whose hands are immaculately clean. The purpose of

the washing is not related to the cleanliness of the hands; it is related to the purity of purpose.

The washing of the hands is an act of sanctification, of realizing that the eating of a meal is a sacred exercise of appreciating God's bounty, and through partaking of God's bounty, having the energy to serve God and to energetically fulfill one's commitments. The eating of the meal is thus a sacred exercise.

The hands are washed to remind the individual who is about to eat that eating is not an exercise in gluttony; instead, it is a holy expression.

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# Land of milk and honey offers diverse menus

Israel, known throughout the ages as the land of milk and honey, offers a cuisine truly global in scope, a cuisine embraced by its inhabitants and its visitors.

In her book "The Foods of Israel Today," author Joan Nathan notes that unlike in France and Italy where cooking has been grounded in the same soil for thousands of years, Israel's food is "new," a hybrid inspired by every corner of the world, but with an increasing emphasis on native ingredients.

The original ingredients used by cooks in Israel included the seven biblical foods mentioned in Deuteronomy — barley, wheat, figs, dates, pomegranates, olives and grapes. Today's Israeli food is more likely to be a smorgasbord of flavors and tantalizing aromas, influenced by a population coming from 90 different countries. It's a simple food, relying on grains and beans as staples. The emphasis is on abundance and tasty fresh food that is properly prepared, minus the frills of haute cuisine.

Israel's a destination with a sampling of almost any national cuisine desired, whether it be Italian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, Indonesian, Mexican, Mediterranean, Hungarian or American. Food seems to be everywhere — in enchanting outdoor cafes and bustling marketplaces, from boisterous street vendors, along beaches, in fast-food chains, in quaint family-owned eateries, in supermarkets, in pedestrian or shopping malls, in hotels, and in plush, award-winning restaurants.

Jewish dietary laws that go back 3,000 years — and prohibit, among other restrictions, the use of milk and meat together in one meal; the eating of pork or shellfish; and the eating of foods prepared in kitchens without a rabbinical seal of approval — are observed in Israel's mostly-kosher restaurants.

Locals start their days with a salad — a towering mound of chopped greens, peppers, radishes, carrots — the chickpea puree called hummus, freshly baked breads, and cheeses. Lunch, the biggest meal of the day, is generally around 2 p.m. It's likely to include more salad; a half dozen soft white cheeses; lamb, chicken, meat

or fish; hamutzim (pickles), and more breads. It's not unusual for the evening meal, often at 8 or 9 p.m., to be light.

A typical Israeli main meal might include Middle Eastern hummus or tahina, Central European turkey or chicken schnitzel with Turkish eggplant salad or Hungarian goulash-type stew, bread, and fresh fruit. Yet, foreign visitors are more likely to exist on popular street food — hummus; shwarma, spicy rotisserie-grilled mutton in a pita; falafel, spicy chickpea fritters and as-many-as-possible fresh vegetables plus hummus stuffed in a pita; skewered barbecued meats; fresh-from-the-oven potato, cheese or spinach phyllo turnovers; blintzes filled with meat or cheese; wedges of super-sweet baklava, and fresh melon or oranges.

When it comes to treats, Israelis are the world's largest consumers of halva, a hard candy with sesame seeds studding a caramel-tasting concoction closely resembling peanut brittle. The widely popular between-meal snack catches on instantly with visitors.

Fish lovers will find Israel a paradise. Restaurants surrounding the tranquil Sea of Galilee, for example, serve up to 20 different species of edible fish. After experiencing a boat ride on the Galilee, tourists frequently dine on St. Peter's Fish, a mild fish so large it stars as the subject of snapshots.

For American visitors bent on remaining loyal to foods their stomachs already digest, there's good news: American foods are fairly prevalent, especially in hotels and the more modern cities. It's not unusual to see a McDonald's, Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, Sbarro or Ben & Jerry's in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem or Eilat. There is little difference between the Israeli and American fast food chains (though the Big Mac will be kosher), and American products (Sweet 'N Low, Coke, and Heinz ketchup and mustard, for example) abound. English is widely spoken so Americans encounter few problems ordering food, and the



Israeli market

American dollar is more welcome than the Israeli shekel (though change is always made in shekels).

The most startling contrast for Americans comes with the limited use of ice in drinks. Because of Israel's water shortage, ice in drinks is considered a luxury. More often than not, cold drinks are served without ice. Requests for ice cubes result in one or two, accompanied by frowns from servers keenly aware of the value of water in Israel.

Americans willing to stray only slightly from their common diet of hamburgers, fries and Cokes can seek refuge in Israeli breads and oblong-shaped Jerusalem bagels, tempting pastries, oversized red and green peppers, magnificent native olives, sweet-as-honey melons, sugarless cereals and granolas, ultra-sweet Jaffa oranges and tangerines, crunchy almonds and walnuts, cheeses, and plump, fresh dates.

Israel can be a godsend for vegetarians and those seeking a healthier diet. In addition to several meat-free hotels, the vegetarian village of Amirim, and noisy marketplaces with splendid fresh vegetables and fruits, takeout stands offering fresh juices abound. Juice choices generally include watermelon, prickly pear, orange, kiwi, peach or strawberry.

Major hotels include all-you-can-eat breakfast and dinner buffets in their daily fare, and most cater to the varied appetites of their visitors. The person who wants a banana, orange juice and cold cereal can walk away from the breakfast buffet as happy as the traveler who

archaeological and holy sites before evening smorgasbord that include tables of salads and appetizers, breads, hot and cold entrees, and desserts.

More adventurous tourists can experience firsthand the culture of native tribal Bedouins, who still wander Israel's harsh deserts. Tent encampments near Be'er Sheva and camel ride attractions near Eilat provide opportunities for young and old to sit around campfires under starry desert skies to eat just-grilled pita bread with hummus and drink sweet Bedouin tea — all under the watchful eyes of resting camels.

Along with food for the soul, Israel offers something to satisfy every appetite.

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## Silver

Continued from prev. page  
statue is Yuri Chernov, 66, of Moscow, who is quoted as

saying that Aleichem was a Russian author who wrote Yiddish.





## Social Calendar

By Jean Herschaft

Purim is about to rise in New York City stature as the Department of Transportation is elevating it to a "no alternate-side of the street parking day."

Thank Councilman **Bill Di Blasio**, a non-Jew, and Orthodox Councilmen **Simcha Felder** (newly elected) and **Dov Hikind** for initiating the wave. It swept up all of the councilmembers. One African American among them said, "Purim is the most joyous of all Jewish holidays and deserves it," a local daily reported.

A fond farewell to **Rabbi Ronald Sobel**, who is leaving his post as spiritual leader of Temple EmanuEl, New York City, after nearly three decades on its bima. EmanuEl is the largest and most prestigious synagogue in the Big Apple.

Last year **Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk**, too put down his official robes as chancellor of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and as head of the Holocaust Museum in Battery Park City. Dr. Gottschalk was a gentle giant of the Reform Movement and a true *mensch*.

**Larry King**, TV talk show host extraordinaire, can sometimes puzzle. Take his past week: guests were popular **Judge Judy**, the WNBC court maven; **Martha Stewart**, the number one \$billion TV home show business whiz and then **Heidi Fleiss**, the convicted madame in Hollywood. It didn't help, if embarrass, that she confided, "I'm Jewish. But we ... the family were never religious." She is no longer in "the business" (her words) but is coming out with a new book shortly. King promoted.

**Kirk Douglas**, 85, son **Michael Douglas** and his wife, Welsh born actress **Catherine Zeta Jones**, and their baby son, **Dylan**, will be leaving for a visit to Israel shortly. Baby Dylan is being raised as a Jew, his granddaddy, Kirk, was proud to tell the media. Kirk Douglas, who sustained a stroke several years ago, has recovered remarkably. A speech impediment is almost inaudible.

As Valentine's Day marks this month, no hearts and flowers for New York City's Jewish museum. It's staging of a Holocaust art exhibit that focuses on the perpetrators instead of the victims speaks for itself. The Holocaust groups are protesting and are boycotting the event.

But a Valentine's personal interview we held with a top, if not the top, U.S. matchmaker by telephone gives a glimpse of matchmaking. The firm is named Great Expectations. **Mitchell Brandt** is its founder.

His company has 55 bases across the country since being founded in 1955 in California. More than 40,000 couples have wed through its *schiddach* services. Of this number, 4,000 are Jewish chuppah mates.

Mitchell states that, because of its huge membership rolls, his company has probably more Jewish singles than those matchmaking firms that specialize in Jewish clients only.

Great Expectations recently opened new offices in Roslyn, Long Island; Englewood, N.J., and New York City.

"People who come to Great Expectations are looking for serious relationship," he says, "and want to take charge of their social relationship, not wait for things too happen."

"They are like kids in a candy store. Where else could they have access to thousands of other singles with photo, profiles, videos and — most important — background checks. Jewish Stars of David and religion are markedly visible..."

A kosher Valentine to all.

## Review — Silver

Continued from page 10

"May I succeed in trying to quit." Next, a Ritual. After that, a Blessing: "Blessed be the One who frees those who are captives." Finally, a Teaching, which can be a citation from the Bible, the Talmud or one of the Sages. In this instance, "How small is the mind which is ruled by

desire," by Israel Salanter.

This book enables the reader to comply with the famous suggestion by the Baal Shem Tov: "Every day a sensitive Jew should utter 100 blessings." It also brings up to date what Jacob said in the wilderness: "God was present here, and I did not know it."

## One Woman's Voice

### Vatican book important to Jews

By MIRIAM ZIMMERMAN

Today's column is almost as much about how to find information as it is about Catholic-Jewish relations. Although buried on page 12 of



the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Jan. 18, 2002), the headline, "Vatican recognizes Jews' messiah claim," cried out to me personally.

The sub-headline hooked me even more: "Scholarly paper says Catholics must regard Old Testament as retaining all of its value." I was excited because, if this were true, it would provide a basis for Catholics and Jews to study together.

Written by Melinda Henneberger of *The New York Times*, the article stated that the scholarly paper was "effectively a rejection of and apology for the way some Christians have viewed the Old Testament, [and] was signed by the Pope's own theologian, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger." Cardinal Ratzinger is prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Documents from this office become official Church teaching.

As someone who teaches a course about the Holocaust in a Catholic University, I wanted more information about any official Church apology regarding Hebrew Scriptures. I went to the Vatican's website and searched a variety of terms, including "Ratzinger" and "Catholic-Jewish relations," but found nothing about a recent scholarly paper.

However, the Vatican website has a section on the roots of anti-Judaism in the Christian environment. There I found "John Paul II and Anti-Semitism, a Personal Experience," by Jean Stern ([http://www.vatican.va/ju-bilee\\_2000/magazine/documents/ju\\_mag\\_01111997\\_p-42a\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/ju-bilee_2000/magazine/documents/ju_mag_01111997_p-42a_en.html)).

Stern's essay quoted Pope John Paul II's speeches and sermons about Jews and anti-

Semitism. For example, in 1990, the Pope spoke these words to the Ambassador of Germany: "The heavy claim derived from the slaughter of the Jewish people must be a permanent appeal for the repentance of all Christians."

Stern documented the many times that the Pope has spoken out against anti-Semitism. The fact that it was on the Vatican's official website gave it much credibility.

I returned to the web using my favorite search engine, Google, and typed in "Catholic-Jewish relations." This search yielded an article by

Philip A. Cunningham, which was published on Sept. 5, 2000 (but dated Aug. 6, 2000 on the Vatican website). I remember what a disappointment "Dominus Iesus" was to the Jewish community because it seemed to indicate that the only path to salvation was through Jesus.

Cunningham explained to non-Jews how this teaching would be offensive to Jews by exploring the ways the document could have damaged Catholic-Jewish relations.

Cunningham stated his purpose: "[to] explore the reasons for this, summarize

*This international electronic distribution is precisely what is needed for the current document since it, unlike "Dominus Iesus," has the potential to improve relations between Catholics and Jews. I am also concerned that few in the Jewish community have noticed this most recent scholarly work by one of the most important of Vatican offices. Does this failure point to a public relations problem in the Vatican or to a lack of interest by the Jewish community? My take on the article is that it moves the reforms of Vatican II to a new level and, as such, should be of extreme importance to both Jews and Catholics.*

Philip A. Cunningham of the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College entitled, "Dominus Iesus (The Lord Jesus) and Catholic Magisterial Teaching on Jews and Judaism" ([http://www2.bc.edu/~cunningph/dominus\\_iesus.htm](http://www2.bc.edu/~cunningph/dominus_iesus.htm)).

I noted with satisfaction that the URL (universal resource locator) contained the letters "edu," indicating that the page was connected to a college or university's website. I teach my students doing web research to look for quality indicators in web addresses, such as "edu," to indicate a connection with an institution of higher learning.

Cunningham's article ana-

lyzed the Vatican's declaration, "Dominus Iesus," which was published on Sept. 5, 2000 (but dated Aug. 6, 2000 on the Vatican website). I remember what a disappointment "Dominus Iesus" was to the Jewish community because it seemed to indicate that the only path to salvation was through Jesus.

Like the current scholarly paper described by Henneberger, "Dominus Iesus" also came from Cardinal Ratzinger's office and was thus official Church teaching.

According to Cunningham, one of the problems with "Dominus Iesus" is that it was written for an internal Catholic readership and not particularly for an international audience. I wondered if the current scholarly work is an attempt to correct the dam-

Continued on page 14

# It's Arlene Peck!

## An only child, thankful for fear, guilt, naivete

By ARLENE PECK

When you were a child, did your mother ever tell you that G-d should only give you a kid like you? Sounds familiar? To be more specific, my



mother, Queen Mollie, would tell me, on a regular basis that I should have four children. However, the first three should be normal and it should only be the fourth one who was like me. Otherwise, I would stop at one child, like she did and she wanted lots of grandchildren. When she was in a really good mood she would tell me, that if I had been a twin, she would have drowned the other one. I was not an easy child to raise.

I don't think that parents today put the guilt on their children which was so prevalent in my mother's day. Those mothers aren't around anymore. Most of them are behind black curtains in heaven. These were the mothers who guarded their children like the crown jewels. They grew up thinking every Jewish and/or Italian home had two in help....their fathers and their mothers. Looking back, I don't think my baby Dana felt the need to walk until she was probably 12. I carried her around like the Torah Scrolls.

Blood is thicker than prune juice. The mothers who came from this generation were the ones who lusted after being the mother or at least the mother-in-law of a medical student. They taught their children at an early age that the Jewish position on abortion was that a fetus was not considered a child until he finished medical school. All of their children were geniuses. Of course, usually the translated mean of that was that they were average.

Are there mothers around today who gloat over their child's early toilet training? In the days gone past, that was the culmination of the motherhood Olympics. Also reason for prime conversation was,

what good eaters their children were. I remember my own mother chasing me around the dining room with a fork in her hand and saying, "Just eat the meat...leave the bread, but, finish the meat." These were the same mothers incidentally who would drive 50 miles further to the grocery store which was having a sale on brisket. Love was measured by food and by the time I was 4 my chubby body looked like Humpty Dumpty. Any refusal to cooperate would result in death by palpitations by my mother. As a result from that early training, today, I lust for anorexia. If

wasn't anyone around to pick up and deliver. If necessary, I caught a bus. Instead of being born with an umbilical cord, I was sure, during my children's formative years that I was connected by a steering wheel. Today, it's a telephone cord. The shank of my day was spent driving carpool.

The Jewish mothers who were so naive that if they should, perchance, find out that their daughter was having an affair, would immediately ask who the caterer was.

Hey, even I was living in a state of innocence. The only disease I suffered from was

norm today.

Of course, our children have a lot more to contend with today. They didn't come into the real world unencumbered by the old fears, doubts and inhibitions. It was important that they had to discover that there are strange and yucky diseases that penicillin can't cure. Actually, though, they probably did more to promote one on one relationships than our mothers could have dreamed of. Many have

been scared into self imposed celibacy. It's scary having diseases that although you may not die from them, there is a very good chance one could live to a ripe old age with them.

Ah yes, looking back, I would have spent my formative years differently. As Whittier wrote, "Of all sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these, "It might have been."

## Podet

Continued from page 7  
deeply.

The Osiris story also explains why it was so frighteningly important to be buried properly, with all parts, even with one's slaves and wives (later only painted on the wall), if one expected to survive the grave.

Rameses II, perhaps the Pharaoh of the Exodus (c. 1250 b.c.e.), was a monument builder. His massive (sometimes 90-foot) statues of himself are everywhere. In one place, Abu Simbel, we have Rameses as Pharaoh worshipping Rameses as God, while Rameses as high priest looks on, and Rameses the man completes the quartet. A modest, self-effacing sort of fellow.

In the same place we have colored pictures of chained slaves, the ones on the first wall clearly Semitic, the ones on the second wall clearly Negroid. One of the Semites looks like my nephew. A relative, no doubt. The Egyptians had great contempt for foreigners of any kind, and it must have been less than delightful to them to be ruled by Cleopatra, a Greek and a woman!

Rameses ("Son of Ra," the sun god) was the son of Seti I, thought to be the Pharaoh of the oppression. We have both mummies, and, curiously enough, both of them show evidence of death by drowning. In addition, modern chemical analysis has suggested or determined (I do not know which) that the water that killed Seti was, in fact, Reed Sea water. Make of that what you will; I have no comment.

The meals on such a tour

are a disaster: endless buffets of wonderful food and dozens of desserts all of which must be tried if only not to insult the chefs. I am now a balloon.

At one of these trough frenzies I sat next to a well-educated German lady of perhaps 40 summers and discussed names. Frequently, German names, she said, especially in America, are assumed to be Jewish. "Alfred Rosenberg?" I offered. "Yes, exactly." Well, we have a generation of Germans who do not recognize the name of Alfred Rosenberg. And she made it a point to note that she had learned quite a lot about the Holocaust.

Karnak, near Luxor (Thebes), was the high point of the trip, a temple-city so large as to suggest, by obvious intention, divine and limitless power. The principal hypostyle is a room consisting of massive, closely placed thick pillars reaching into the sky. All walls, everything, is covered with reliefs and hieroglyphics, the original paint still often visible.

All the gods are pictured here, even one "Met," a notable fellow who was left behind when the men of the city went off to war. He was to guard the women. When the victorious soldiers returned a half year later, all the wives were pregnant. Poor Met was driven out into the desert to die, but his numerous children elevated him to be a god. So here he stands, identified by a section of his anatomy as long as his shin, in discourse with the other gods.

In all our trips and all our conversations, we found

Continued on next page

*Are there mothers around today who gloat over their child's early toilet training? In the days gone past, that was the culmination of the motherhood Olympics. Also reason for prime conversation was, what good eaters their children were. I remember my own mother chasing me around the dining room with a fork in her hand and saying, "Just eat the meat...leave the bread, but, finish the meat." These were the same mothers incidentally who would drive 50 miles further to the grocery store which was having a sale on brisket. Love was measured by food...*

only the thought of throwing up didn't nauseate me.

Hey, I can't help it. Things were different in my day. Even my generation had my share of basic nudging. I would wonder why was it that strangers would constantly come up and say how respectful and wonderful my children were. I would always have mothers at whose houses that they'd spent the night tell me how nicely my kids helped clear the table and make their beds. At home? I never saw that. If there was such a thing as reincarnation, I wanted to come back and be a mother of a stranger.

My mother never had to contend with carpools. I walked everywhere. There

guilt — malady common in my era and transmitted by Jewish mothers. It was just the times. We had a generation of parents who would have cut our hearts out with an emery board if we had even thought of straying from the paths of acceptable behavior. These were the days before the pill. The only pill we knew about was aspirin.

Personally, I've always felt that it was just that my timing was off. I have serious doubts that the morality issues were what kept me a 'nice girl.' No, I believe that it was the thought of instant pregnancy and ultimately instant death at my mother's hands if I should ever consider what seems to be the

# Zimmerman

Continued from page 12  
age to Catholic-Jewish relations caused by "Dominus Iesus."

Cunningham's article concluded with an explication of post-Vatican II teachings about the Jews, stunning in its clarity and comprehensiveness. I bookmarked the site for further study.

I turned to the web again and found Henneberger's original article on *The New York Times* website at <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/18/international/18VATI.html>.

Henneberger's *Times* article contained more information than the *Chronicle* included. Her original article clarified that I had been correct in my speculation that the current paper was a corrective to "Dominus Iesus."

The "scholarly paper" referred to in the *Chronicle* turned out to be a 210-page book. In *The Times*, Henneberger pointed out: "The oddest thing about the document from the Jewish perspective is that it was so quietly released."

"It has been in bookstores here since November, but as a small book titled, *The Jewish People and the Holy Scriptures in the Christian Bible*; it drew no notice until the Italian news agency ANSA printed a small report on it Wednesday (Jan. 16, 2002)."

Armed with the exact title of the current Vatican release, I jubilantly returned to the Vatican website and still found nothing. Evidently, the 210-page book has not yet been posted. However, since it is official Church teaching, I am hoping it will be avail-

able to students in my Holocaust course next fall.

Henneberger quoted Cardinal Ratzinger directly in the *Times* version of her article. "The document says Jews and Christians in fact share the wait for the Messiah, though Jews are waiting for the first coming, and Christians for the second."

"The difference consists in the fact that for us, he who will come will have the same traits of that Jesus who has already come," wrote Cardinal Ratzinger. "This sentence is significant because it doesn't say that it is Jesus who will come again, but that he who will come will have the same traits as Jesus."

The newly released article, "the result of years of work by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, goes on to apologize for the fact that certain New Testament passages that criticize the Pharisees, for example, have been used to justify anti-Semitism."

As a Jewish educator in a Catholic institution, I am impatient to read more about any official Church teaching that apologizes in any way for anti-Semitism.

As a communication professor who teaches students the importance of finding accurate and current information, I was interested in the discrepancies in the reports about this scholarly paper. First, I was disappointed in the *Chronicle*'s omissions in Henneberger's article.

I also noted the discrepancy in the publication date of "Dominus Iesus" as reported by Cunningham and by the Vatican. It was also interesting to read Cunningham's obser-

vation that the authors of "Dominus Iesus" wrote for an internal Catholic readership and that the writers did not anticipate nor intend that it would be distributed electronically to a worldwide audience.

This international electronic distribution is precisely what is needed for the current document since it, unlike "Dominus Iesus," has the potential to improve relations between Catholics and Jews.

I am also concerned that few in the Jewish community have noticed this most recent scholarly work by one of the most important of Vatican offices. Does this failure point to a public relations problem in the Vatican or to a lack of interest by the Jewish community?

My take on the article is that it moves the reforms of Vatican II to a new level and, as such, should be of extreme importance to both Jews and Catholics. Its publication seems to this outsider to provide an opportunity for a much-needed reinvigoration of Catholic-Jewish relations.

Henneberger evidently interviewed a variety of leaders to include their responses, including Rabbi Alberto Piattelli, a professor and leader of the Jewish community in Rome. Rabbi Piattelli stated, "It [the Vatican's scholarly document] recognizes the value of the Jewish position regarding the wait for the Messiah, changes the whole exegesis of biblical studies, and restores our biblical passages to their original meaning. I was surprised."

Henneberger also cited Andrea Riccardi, the founder

of the Sant'Egidio Community, a left-leaning Catholic group with a history of mediating international conflicts and promoting religious dialogue, who said he was most impressed by the depth of the new document.

"This should be reassuring to Jews," he said, "especially because these last years have not been easy." He said the document in no way backtracks from "Dominus Iesus," but ~~does~~ represent a significant shift.

"In the past, we've talked about an ancient, common heritage," he said. "But now, for the first time, we're talking about our future waiting for the Messiah and the end of time." "Waiting together?" Henneberger asked him. "No," Mr. Riccardi said. "But waiting close to each other."

Dissenting opinion came from within the Catholic community. "At least initially, the only voices of dissent were on the Catholic side," reported Henneberger, "where some traditionalists said they felt the Church under Pope John Paul II has done altogether too much apologizing already."

After the dust has settled on this document, I will be eager to discover the extent to which it will, indeed, make a difference in the way in which Catholics understand Judaism. My preliminary take on a document about which I have read only these reports is that it provides a theological basis for Catholics in how to view the Messiah that is consistent with Jewish teaching.

## Podet

Continued from prev. page  
among the Egyptians no sign of hostility to Jews, and very little indeed to Israel. And that also from people who had no reason to patronize us. Frequently, we were anonymous to our conversation partners, and most of the conversations were in German since we were with a German group. (We had booked the tour in Berlin; it never occurred to us that it would be in German until we were on it.)

The felucca sailor had decorated his boat with a variety of flags, and he asked that we send him one. When I suggested an American or Israeli flag, he seemed genuinely and indifferently accepting of either one.

One is led to believe that

The document seems to clarify that the Jewish wait for the Messiah is now accepted Church teaching, valid for Jews and in no way contradicting the Christian wait for the return.

The promise of this doctrine is that, instead of dwelling on past memories of the Jew as Christ-killer, Catholics and Jews now have a common language with which they can discuss the Messiah.

It will be possible for Jews and Catholics to study the Messiah with mutual acceptance instead of the built in contradiction that has been our starting point in the past.

In addition to remembering the Holocaust and the Christian anti-Judaism that provided context and motivation, students need to move forward and ask, "What next?"

I feel the next step is for Christians and Jews to study our theology and liturgy together, perhaps even to create new understandings about our common teachings.

Like it or not, new media technology has made us a one-world community with the capacity to communicate with individuals, small groups, or whole nations instantaneously and interactively.

We have always shared one G-d, despite disparate interpretations by different religious groups. The divisiveness of separate revelations has been deadly. Working together can be a corrective to the bloody past and once and for all insure "Never again!"

With G-d's help, may it be so.

## Mystery Person

Do you know who's who?

- The Mystery Person's business acumen is well known.
- The Mystery Person is an entertainer.
- The Mystery Person has made at least eight trips to India.
- The Mystery Person is a film producer.

All Mystery Persons are limited to North American Jews. Winners of the Mystery Person contest will receive a two-month subscription, the equivalent of \$8 if not a subscriber, or, if a subscriber, a two-month extension of their subscription. Once appearing in the contest, that same individual will not be repeated as a Mystery Person. All correct answers are considered winners, not only the first received.



# Letters

## Another criticism of Dabru Emet

(Dymin and Neusner gave the P-O permission to print this letter. ed.)

Dear Prof. Neusner,

Your note to the Editor of NJP regarding Dabru Emet prompted me to reread "The Trial of God" by Elie Wiesel.

"A strange association," — one would say. Perhaps, but I would like to share a thought with you.

I came back to Wiesel not to admire his hero's faithfulness to God who was accused by the hero himself for God's betrayals of the Jews. I came back to Shamgorod of 1649 to hear and see again the words and deeds that make Dabru Emet questionable.

Putting aside theological and political considerations for a moment, Dabru Emet becomes possible because the secularization of the Jewish community and because the American Christians for a large part have become tolerant of Judaism. This makes intermarriages tolerable for a large part of Jewish community itself, and this fact compels its leaders to look for a justification of Christianity as God's word besides the Torah, as a moral force.

Today it happens not only on an intellectual level (as in the writings of German Jewish thinkers a century ago), but also on a way of life. A tolerance should be recognized as a sign of mature ethics. The Christian symbols, theology, and institutions had not laid grounds for such a maturity. Rereading *The Trial* I was thinking: "How different are the Jews of Shamgorod from the Jews of Brooklyn; how different is the Christian mob of those days from the Christian crowd of our days!"

What has made this difference? It has been made not by some inner spiritual development of Christianity but by religious wars between Christians, the assault of the Enlightenment on Christianity, the growth of Western democracies, the shame of Holocaust. Surely, Christianity as a worldview and way of life has some specific features that should be taken into account when we explain the growth of the Western democracy. Still, the cultural and religious tolerance of the

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Western society is not the gift of Christianity, and there is no ground to look at the Gospels as God's word beside the Torah.

I have reread *The Trial* to experience anew a pride for my ancestors who accepted the Torah with her recognition of the necessity to be tolerant to other nations even in the face of their evil idolatry. They kept the Torah (not the Old Testament as Christians would like to say) and longed for humanity in their neighbors. One should not remind us ideological excesses of some preachers who would reduce Jewish choosiness, explicitly or implicitly, to a Jewish ethnicity.

*The Trial* ends with the God's defender giving a signal for the Christian mob to start a pogrom. And this historically prudent end of the play says to me that Christianity, however it has been changed, was not God's gospel to start with, that Dabru Emet has no grounds. Conversely, *The Trial's* depiction of the Jews' response to God for sake of the Torah, for sake of humanity, historically prudent as well, says to me that in spite of all diversity in the modern Judaism, the Torah is God's word to start with.

There is another book that comes to my mind when I see how Judaism's historical integrity is subordinated to moral considerations shaped up by the modern political correctness and necessity to appease the mixed congregations. It is "The Future Jew" by Michael Carin.

His critique of a religion is not original, and there is not much new in this respect after, for example, Charles Templeton, Gurd Luedemann and many others of old and new. What is original here in comparison with non-Jewish discharges of God is M. Carin's call to Jews to become the chosen people again — to become "a bold tribe to serve as history's pivotal postman" again.

The Jews had delivered the monotheism to mankind, now their task is to response to their and other nations' history by delivering a global secularization. Is this task has any practicality, would this resolve the problems of the modernity, would a globally secular culture be able to sus-

tain itself? — it is a topic for a special discussion. Here I want just to stress that such call for the global secularization displays much more intellectual and historical integrity than Dabru Emet.

I reread "The Trial" and "The Future Jew" as references for my personal argument against Dabru Emet. Both parts of the argument, so distant from each other, arouse echoes in my mind, and I want to share them with you as a rabbi and a scholar. At the same time I am thinking of your books, which were written together with Father Andrew M. Greeley and Bruce D. Chilton.

You concluded the second edition of *The Bible and Us* by accepting the possibility and necessity of a dialogue between Christianity and Judaism for "each has the capacity to share with and nourish the other."

I know that you are calling not for relativism but for discovering the authentic humanity of the other. I know also that you don't regard, for example, E. Levinas' work, devoted to such a discovery, as a long lasting achievement. It is just another evidence that for you the Torah itself and only reigns supreme in the task of discovering the authentic humanity of others and ourselves. It also means that there is not an authentic (Talmudic!) dialogue with other religions, the dialogue where "give and take" reigns supreme as well. Otherwise Dabru Emet regains a ground.

With appreciation of your thoughts and responses as always,

Boris Dymin

## Pandering to pope wrong for Judaism

Dear editor,

Gushing report on how various rabbis stood near the Pope in Assisi at the recent convocation for peace (no specifics, please) under Papal auspices lack all dignity, an act of pandering to the goyim that used to be called Mahyofisnik-ism.

When the Pope calls to the religions of the world to enter into a symbolic transaction with him as the head, as took place last month, it is the task of self-respecting Judaism to

decline, not to come running. It is true that we have joint interests with Roman Catholic Christianity, shared tasks and common concerns. But these are specific to the social order of politics and public welfare.

Rabbi Ehrenkrantz of Sacred Heart University and Rabbi Rosen of the American Jewish Committee and the others — even including a representative of the British chief rabbi, who has better sense than this! — had no business in Assisi, carrying spears in the Pope's entourage. To engage in such theological transactions is to surrender the Judaic claim to unique possession of the truth of God's self-manifestation through the Torah at Sinai. If that claim is valid, as the synagogue has maintained through all time, then the Pope, with all due respect for the man and his office in his own Church, is not the head of the religions of the world assembled under his auspices, as the organization of the Assisi event implied.

Judaism is the head of the religions of the world, and should be organizing events of this kind, if its leadership sees merit in such projects of public display.

From 1989 for five years I attended the annual international convocations of world religions organized by the Roman Catholic Community of St. Egidius, in Warsaw, Malta, Brussels, Assisi, and elsewhere. Then I realized that

my task was not substantive but merely symbolic: to pay homage by representing Judaism at celebrations embodying the headship and leadership among religions exercised by the Roman Catholic Church.

These meetings were not, and were not intended to be, exercises of sharing ideas and engaging with truth. They were wordless processions meant to show who was in charge. That is why I stopped going, and why I think it is an error for the institutional leadership in Judaism to participate.

Jacob Neusner

Bard College

Amundale-on-Hudson, N.Y.

## Sandler article service to truth

Dear editor,

The article, "The Land of Israel: A Historical Perspective," by Robert Sandler, which appeared in your Jan. 2 issue, is one of the most factual and lucid explanations of the basis for Israel's rights to the land and the Palestinian philosophy in that regard.

It should be read by all and particularly the media and those diplomatically involved.

I commend Professor Sandler for his research and authorship and you for printing it.

Arden A. Muchin

1426 Arden Lane

Manitowoc, WI 54220

## Read it, but not seriously

Reviewed by JUDY CARR

*The Agreement: The Epic Struggle for the Temple Mount*, by Lionel I. Casper. Published by Gefen Publishing; Jerusalem, New York. 378 pp.

*The Agreement* is a swash-buckling, full-blooded Israeli thriller, with all the best ingredients for cliff-hanging fun.

A secret agreement between Jordan and Israel, Jordanian royalty, Arabs, Arab and Jewish mixed marriage, a bank robbery, papal plots — what more can any devotee of

thrillers ask?

Those knowledgeable about Israeli life will understand that this is fiction of the highest order, but scarcely resembles day-to-day Israel.

Don't, therefore, read this book to study Israel, but to have a good time.

Why should writers about Israel always be serious? Have the best entertainment and be lifted away from real life. A book that is sheer fun and absolute joy.